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BRITISH THEATRE;

OR,

A COLLECTION OF PLAYS,

WHICH ARE ACTED AT

THE THEATRES ROYAL,

DRURY LANE, COVENT GARDEN, AND HAYMARKET.

43018

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOKS.

WITH

BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL REMARKS,

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

IN TWENTY-FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. XI.

BUSY BODY.
WONDER.
BOLD ROKE FOR A WIFE.
GEORGE BARNWELL.
FATAL CURIOSITY.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

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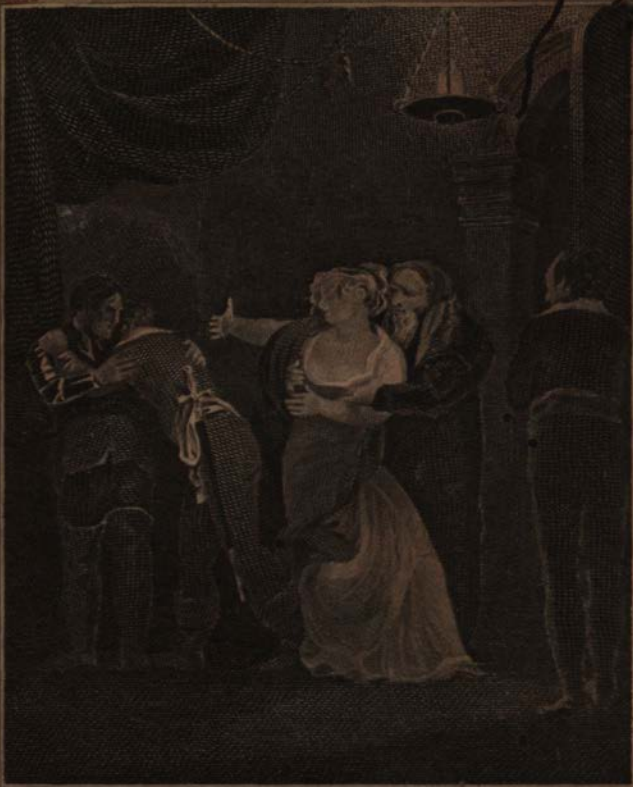
VENICE PRESERVED



VENICE PRESERVED;

OR,

A PLOT DISCOVERED;

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

By THOMAS OTWAY.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRES-ROYAL,

DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, BROWN, PATERNOSTER ROW.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.

REMARKS.

The author of this popular tragedy died in the reign of Charles the second. He was the son of a clergyman, and was born at Trotting, in Sussex, where his father resided, in 1651.

Otway received his early education at a school near Winchester, and then became a commoner of Christ Church, Oxford. Soon after his return from the university, his passionate admiration of dramatic amusements induced him to venture his abilities on the stage, as an actor: in this attempt he wholly mistook the department of the theatre, which his talents were calculated to grace: but not till he had changed the profession of a comedian for that of a soldier, and had served in Flanders as a cornet of horse, did he try the force of his genius in the art, by which he has procured his renown.

"Venice Preserved" is the favourite work of Otway. It is played repeatedly every year; except when an order from the Lord Chamberlain forbids its representation, lest some of the speeches of Pierre should be applied, by the ignorant part of the audience, to certain men, or assemblies, in the English state.

The story of this play is taken from St. Real's Conspiracy of the Marquis de Bedamar, and the Duke d'Ossuna, against the republic of Venice: and, amongst a great deal of political declamation, anger, and fury, is interwoven the tenderest and most pathetic distress. It is Otway's highest praise, that he moves his audience to pity, more than any other dramatic writer.

The passion of love, finely portrayed on the stage, is supposed to engage every heart, because it is supposed that every heart has already been softened by its power. But, although an audience be chiefly composed of the unmarried part of society, still conjugal love has a deeper interest in the bosom of every auditor than any other affection. The connubial state of Jaffier and Belvidera causes that sympathy in their grief from beholders, which neither the harmonious numbers of the poet, nor the exquisite acting of the performers, could awaken, merely on the part of two lovers. Some passages of this tragedy have, however, been attributed to the sentiments which the author's own sufferings inspired, rather than to the fictitious woes of those, his creatures of imagination.

Though the poverty of authors be proverbial, Otway appears to have been among the poorest and most destitute of all the class. The following lines, spoken by Jaffier, were, probably, written with the exact feelings which his own distresses had aroused.

"There's not a wretch, that lives on common charity,
"But's happier than me: for I have known
"The luscious sweets of plenty," &c.

And farther,

" Tell me why, good Heaven,
" Thou mad'st me w[illegible]at I am, with all the spirit,
" Aspiring thoughts, and elegant desires,
" That fill the happiest man?——
" Why have I sense to know the curse that's on me?

It is reported, that the author of " Venice Preserved" perished for want of food: and whatsoever well-disposed person shall read his Dedication of this very tragedy to the Duchess of Portsmouth (one of King Charles's mistresses), wherein he calls her—" The pious mother of a prince, whose blooming virtues declare the mighty stock he comes from",—such reader will own, that, if he *were* starved to death, the event at least did some honour to his patroness;—as it showed her proper contempt for his base flattery.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY-LANE.	COVENT-GARDEN.
DUKE OF VENICE	*Mr. Maddocks.*	*Mr. Davenport.*
PRIULI	*Mr. Powell.*	*Mr. Murray.*
BEDAMAR	*Mr. Raymond.*	*Mr. Brunton.*
PIERRE	*Mr. Barrymore.*	*Mr. Cooke.*
JAFFIER	*Mr. H. Siddons.*	*Mr. C. Kemble.*
RENAULT	*Mr. Eyre.*	*Mr. Chapman.*
ELLIOT	*Mr. Webb.*	*Mr. Creswell.*
SPINOSA	*Mr. Carles.*	*Mr. Claremont.*
THEODORE	*Mr. Male.*	*Mr. L. Bologna.*
MEZZANA	*Mr. Evans.*	*Mr. King.*
DURAND		*Mr. Jefferies.*
CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD	*Mr. Cooke.*	*Mr. Field.*
OFFICER	*Mr. Fisher.*	*Mr. Treby.*
EXECUTIONER		*Mr. Powers.*
BELVIDERA	*Mrs. Powell.*	*Mrs. Siddons.*

VENICE PRESERVED,

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

St. Mark's.

Enter PRIULI *and* JAFFIER.

Priuli. No more! I'll hear no more! begone, and leave me!

Jaff. Not hear me! by my sufferings, but you shall!
My lord—my lord! I'm not that abject wretch
You think me. Patience! where's the distance throws
Me back so far, but I may boldly speak
In right, though proud oppression will not hear me?

Priuli. Have you not wrong'd me?

Jaff. Could my nature e'er
Have brook'd injustice, or the doing wrongs,
I need not now thus low have bent myself
To gain a hearing from a cruel father.—
Wrong'd you?

Priuli. Yes, wrong'd me! in the nicest point,
The honour of my house, you've done me wrong.
You may remember (for I now will speak,
And urge its baseness) when you first came home

From travel, with such hopes as made you look'd on
By all men's eyes, a youth of expectation;
Pleas'd with your growing virtue, I receiv'd you;
Courted, and sought to raise you to your merits;
My house, my table, nay, my fortune too,
My very self was yours; you might have us'd me
To your best service; like an open friend
I treated, trusted you, and thought you mine;
When, in requital of my best endeavours,
You treacherously practis'd to undo me;
Seduc'd the weakness of my age's darling,
My only child, and stole her from my bosom.
Oh! Belvidera!

Jaff. 'Tis to me you owe her:
Childless you had been else, and in the grave
Your name extinct; no more Priuli heard of.
You may remember, scarce five years are past,
Since in your brigantine you sail'd to see
The Adriatic wedded by our duke;
And I was with you; your unskilful pilot
Dash'd us upon a rock; when to your boat
You made for safety; enter'd first yourself;
Th' affrighted Belvidera, following next,
As she stood trembling on the vessel's side,
Was by a wave wash'd off into the deep:
When instantly I plung'd into the sea,
And buffeting the billows to her rescue,
Redeem'd her life with half the loss of mine.
Like a rich conquest, in one hand I bore her,
And with the other dash'd the saucy waves,
That throng'd and press'd to rob me of my prize.
I brought her, gave her to your despairing arms;
Indeed you thank'd me; but a nobler gratitude
Rose in her soul: for from that hour she lov'd me,
Till for her life she paid me with herself.

Priuli. You stole her from me; like a thief you stole her,
At dead of night; that cursed hour you chose

To rifle me of all my heart held dear.
May all your joys in her prove false, like mine!
A sterile fortune, and a barren bed,
Attend you both: continual discord make
Your days and nights bitter and grievous still;
May the hard hand of a vexatious need
Oppress and grind you; till at last you find
The curse of disobedience all your portion.

Jaff. Half of your curse you have bestow'd in vain.
Heav'n has already crown'd our faithful loves
With a young boy, sweet as his mother's beauty:
May he live to prove more gentle than his grandsire,
And happier than his father.

Priuli. Rather live
To bait thee for his bread, and din your ears
With hungry cries; whilst his unhappy mother
Sits down and weeps in bitterness of want.

Jaff. You talk as if 'twould please you.

Priuli. 'Twould, by Heaven!

Jaff. 'Would I were in my grave!

Priuli. And she too with thee:
For, living here, you're but my curs'd remembrancers.
I once was happy!

Jaff. You use me thus, because you know my soul
Is fond of Belvidera. You perceive
My life feeds on her, therefore thus you treat me.
Were I that thief, the doer of such wrongs
As you upbraid me with, what hinders me
But I might send her back to you with contumely,
And court my fortune where she would be kinder?

Priuli. You dare not do't.

Jaff. Indeed, my lord, I dare not.
My heart, that awes me, is too much my master:
Three years are past since first our vows were plighted,
During which time, the world must bear me witness,
I've treated Belvidera like your daughter,
The daughter of a senator of Venice;

Distinction, place, attendance, and observance,
Due to her birth, she always has commanded:
Out of my little fortune I've done this;
Because, (though hopeless e'er to win your nature)
The world might see I lov'd her for herself;
Not as the heiress of the great Priuli.

Priuli. No more.

Jaff. Yes, all, and then adieu for ever.
There's not a wretch, that lives on common charity,
But's happier than me; for I have known
The luscious sweets of plenty; every night
Have slept with soft content about my head,
And never wak'd, but to a joyful morning:
Yet now must fall, like a full ear of corn,
Whose blossom 'scap'd, yet's wither'd in the ripening.

Priuli. Home, and be humble; study to retrench;
Discharge the lazy vermin of thy hall,
Those pageants of thy folly:
Reduce the glitt'ring trappings of thy wife
To humble weeds, fit for thy little state:
Then to some suburb cottage both retire;
Drudge to feed loathsome life; gets brats and starve—
Home, home, I say. [*Exit.*

Jaff. Yes, if my heart would let me——
This proud, this swelling heart: home I would go,
But that my doors are hateful to my eyes,
Fill'd and damm'd up with gaping creditors:
I've now not fifty ducats in the world,
Yet still I am in love, and pleas'd with ruin.
Oh Belvidera! Oh! she is my wife——
And we will bear our wayward fate together,
But ne'er know comfort more.

Enter PIERRE.

Pierre. My friend, good-morrow;
How fares the honest partner of my heart?
What, melancholy! not a word to spare me!

Jaff. I'm thinking, Pierre, how that damn'd starving quality,
Call'd honesty, got footing in the world.
Pierre. Why, powerful villany first set it up,
For its own ease and safety. Honest men
Are the soft easy cushions on which knaves
Repose and fatten. Were all mankind villains,
They'd starve each other; lawyers would want practice,
Cut-throats rewards: each man would kill his brother
Himself; none would be paid or hang'd for murder.
Honesty! 'twas a cheat invented first
To bind the hands of bold deserving rogues,
That fools and cowards might sit safe in power,
And lord it uncontroll'd above their betters.
Jaff. Then honesty is but a notion?
Pierre. Nothing else;
Like wit, much talk'd off, not to be defin'd:
He that pretends to most, too, has least share in't.
'Tis a ragged virtue. Honesty! no more on't.
Jaff. Sure thou art honest?
Pierre. So, indeed, men think me;
But they are mistaken, Jaffier: I am a rogue
As well as they;
A fine, gay, bold-fac'd villain as thou seest me.
'Tis true, I pay my debts, when they're contracted;
I steal from no man; would not cut a throat
To gain admission to a great man's purse,
Or a whore's bed; I'd not betray my friend,
To get his place or fortune; I scorn to flatter
A blown up fool above me, or crush the wretch beneath me;
Yet, Jaffier, for all this I am a villain.
Jaff. A villain!
Pierre. Yes, a most notorious villain;
To see the sufferings of my fellow-creatures,
And own myself a man; to see our senators
Cheat the deluded people with a show

Of liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of.
They say, by them our hands are free from fetters;
Yet whom they please they lay in basest bonds;
Bring whom they please to infamy and sorrow;
Drive us, like wrecks, down the rough tide of power,
Whilst no hold's left to save us from destruction.
All that bear this are villains, and I one,
Not to rouse up at the great call of nature,
And check the growth of these domestic spoilers,
That make us slaves, and tell us 'tis our chaster.

Jaff. I think no safety can be here for virtue,
And grieve, my friend, as much as thou, to live
In such a wretched state as this of Venice,
Where all agree to spoil the public good,
And villains fatten with the brave man's labours.

Pierre. We've neither safety, unity, nor peace, my friend,
For the foundation's lost of common good;
Justice is lame, as well as blind, amongst us;
The laws (corrupted to their ends that make them)
Serve but for instruments of some new tyranny,
That every day starts up, t'enslave us deeper.
Now could this glorious cause but find out friends
To do it right, O Jaffier! then might'st thou
Not wear those seals of woe upon thy face;
The proud Priuli should be taught humanity,
And learn to value such a son as thou art.
I dare not speak, but my heart bleeds this moment.

Jaff. Curs'd be the cause, though I, thy friend, be part on't:
Let me partake the troubles of thy bosom,
For I am us'd to misery, and perhaps
May find a way to sweeten't to thy spirit.

Pierre. Too soon 'twill reach thy knowledge—

Jaff. Then from thee
Let it proceed. There's virtue in thy friendship,
Would make the saddest tale of sorrow pleasing,
Strengthen my constancy, and welcome ruin.

Pierre. Then thou art ruin'd!
Jaff. That I long since knew;
I and ill fortune have been long acquainted,
Pierre. I pass'd this very moment by thy doors,
And found them guarded by a troop of villains;
The sons of public rapine were destroying.
They told me, by the sentence of the law,
They had commission to seize all thy fortune:
Nay, more, Priuli's cruel hand had sign'd it.
Here stood a ruffian, with an horrid face,
Lording it o'er a pile of massy plate,
Tumbled into a heap for public sale:
There was another making villanous jests
At thy undoing: he had ta'en possession
Of all thy ancient most domestic ornaments;
The very bed, which, on thy wedding night,
Receiv'd thee to the arms of Belvidera,
The scene of all thy joys, was violated
By the coarse hands of filthy dungeon villains,
And thrown amongst the common lumber.
Jaff. Now, thank Heaven!
Pierre. Thank Heaven! for what?
Jaff. That I'm not worth a ducat.
Pierre. Curse thy dull stars, and the worse fate of Venice,
Where brothers, friends, and fathers, all are false;
Where there's no truth, no trust; where innocence
Stoops under vile oppression, and vice lords it.
Hadst thou but seen, as I did, how, at last,
Thy beauteous Belvidera, like a wretch
That's doom'd to banishment, came weeping forth,
Whilst two young virgins, on whose arm she lean'd,
Kindly look'd up, and at her grief grew sad,
As if they catch'd the sorrows that fell from her:
Ev'n the lewd rabble, that were gather'd round
To see the sight, stood mute when they beheld her;
Govern'd their roaring throats, and grumbled pity:
I could have hugg'd the greasy rogues; they pleas'd me

Jaff. I thank thee for this story, from my soul;
Since now I know the worst that can befall me.
Ah, Pierre! I have a heart that could have borne
The roughest wrong my fortune could have done me;
But when I think what Belvidera feels,
The bitterness her tender spirits taste of,
I own myself a coward: bear my weakness;
If, throwing thus my arms about thy neck,
I play the boy, and blubber in thy bosom.
Oh, I shall drown thee with my sorrows.
Pierre. Burn,
First, burn and level Venice to thy ruin.
What! starve, like beggars' brats, in frosty weather,
Under a hedge, and whine ourselves to death!
Thou, or thy cause, shall never want assistance,
Whilst I have blood or fortune fit to serve thee:
Command my heart, thou'rt every way its master.
Jaff. No; there's a secret pride in bravely dying.
Pierre. Rats die in holes and corners, dogs run mad;
Man knows a braver remedy for sorrow;
Revenge, the attribute of gods; they stamp'd it,
With their great image, on our natures. Die!
Consider well the cause that calls upon thee;
And, if thou'rt base enough, die then. Remember
Thy Belvidera suffers; Belvidera!
Die!—damn first!—What! be decently interr'd
In a churchyard, and mingle thy brave dust
With stinking rogues, that rot in winding-sheets,
Surfeit-slain fools, the common dung o'th' soil!
Jaff. Oh!
Pierre. Well said, out with't—swear a little——
Jaff. Swear! By sea and air; by earth, by heav'n and hell,
I will revenge my Belvidera's tears!
Hark thee, my friend—Priuli—is—a senator!
Pierre. A dog!
Jaff. Agreed.

Pierre. Shoot him!
Jaff. With all my heart!
No more—where shall we meet at night?
Pierre. I'll tell thee:
On the Rialto, every night at twelve,
I take my evening's walk of meditation:
There we two will meet, and talk of precious
Mischief——
Jaff. Farewell!
Pierre. At twelve.
Jaff. At any hour; my plagues
Will keep me waking. [*Exit* PIERRE.
Tell me why, good Heaven,
Thou mad'st me what I am, with all the spirit,
Aspiring thoughts, and elegant desires,
That fill the happiest man? Ah, rather, why
Didst thou not form me sordid as my fate,
Base-minded, dull, and fit to carry burdens?
Why have I sense to know the curse that's on me?
Is this just dealing, nature? Belvidera!
Poor Belvidera!
Bel. [*Without.*] Lead me, lead me, my virgins,
To that kind voice.

Enter BELVIDERA.

My lord, my love, my refuge!
Happy my eyes, when they behold thy face!
My heavy heart will leave its doleful beating
At sight of thee, and bound with sprightful joys.
Oh, smile! as when our loves were in their spring,
And cheer my fainting soul!
Jaff. As when our loves
Were in their spring! Has then my fortune chang'd thee?
Art thou not, Belvidera, still the same,
Kind, good, and tender, as my arms first found thee?
If thou art alter'd, where shall I have harbour?
Where ease my loaded heart? Oh! where complain?

Bel. Does this appear like change, or love decaying,
When thus I throw myself into thy bosom,
With all the resolution of strong truth!
I joy more in thee
Than did thy mother, when she hugg'd thee first,
And bless'd the gods for all her travail past.

Jaff. Can there in woman be such glorious faith?
Sure, all ill stories of thy sex are false!
Oh, woman! lovely woman! Nature made thee
To temper man; we had been brutes without you!
Angels are painted fair, to look like you:
There's in you all that we believe of heav'n;
Amazing brightness, purity, and truth,
Eternal joy, and everlasting love!

Bel. If love be treasure, we'll be wondrous rich;
Oh! lead me to some desert, wide and wild,
Barren as our misfortunes, where my soul
May have its vent, where I may tell aloud
To the high heavens, and ev'ry list'ning planet,
With what a boundless stock my bosom's fraught.

Jaff. Oh, Belvidera! doubly I'm a beggar;
Undone by fortune, and in debt to thee.
Want, worldly want, that hungry meagre fiend,
Is at my heels, and chases me in view.
Canst thou bear cold and hunger? Can these limbs,
Fram'd for the tender offices of love,
Endure the bitter gripes of smarting poverty?
When banish'd by our miseries abroad,
(As suddenly we shall be) to seek out,
In some far climate, where our names are strangers,
For charitable succour; wilt thou then,
When in a bed of straw we shrink together,
And the bleak winds shall whistle round our heads;
Wilt thou then talk thus to me? Wilt thou then
Hush my cares thus, and shelter me with love?

Bel. Oh! I will love thee, even in madness love thee!
Though my distracted senses should forsake me,

I'd find some intervals when my poor heart
Should 'suage itself, and be let loose to thine.
Though the bare earth be all our resting place,
Its roots our food, some cliff our habitation,
I'll make this arm a pillow for thine head;
And, as thou sighing liest, and swell'd with sorrow,
Creep to thy bosom, pour the balm of love
Into thy soul, and kiss thee to thy rest;
Then praise our God, and watch till the morning.

Jaff. Hear this, you Heav'ns, and wonder how you made her!
Reign, reign, ye monarchs, that divide the world;
Busy rebellion ne'er will let you know
Tranquillity and happiness like mine;
Like gaudy ships, the obsequious billows fall,
And rise again, to lift you in your pride;
They wait but for a storm, and then devour you:
I, in my private bark already wreck'd,
Like a poor merchant, driven to unknown land,
That had, by chance, pack'd up his choicest treasure,
In one dear casket, and sav'd only that;
Since I must wander farther on the shore,
Thus hug my little, but my precious store,
Resolv'd to scorn, and trust my fate no more.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

The Rialto.

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaff. I'm here; and thus, the shades of night around me,
I look as if all hell were in my heart,
And I in hell. Nay, surely 'tis so with me!——
For every step I tread, methinks some fiend
Knocks at my breast, and bids it not be quiet.
I've heard how desperate wretches, like myself,
Have wander'd out at this dead time of night,
To meet the foe of mankind in his walk.
Sure I'm so curs'd, that, though of Heav'n forsaken,
No minister of darkness cares to tempt me.
Hell! hell! why sleep'st thou?

Enter PIERRE.

Pierre. Sure I've staid too long:
The clock has struck, and I may lose my proselyte.
Speak, who goes there?
Jaff. A dog, that comes to howl
At yonder moon. What's he, that asks the question?
Pierre. A friend to dogs, for they are honest creatures,
And ne'er betray their masters; never fawn
On any that they love not. Well met, friend—— Jaffier!

Jaff. The same.
Pierre. Where's Belvidera?
Jaff. For a day or two,
I've lodg'd her privately, till I see farther
What fortune will do with me. Pr'ythee, friend,
If thou wouldst have me sit to hear good counsel,
Speak not of Belvidera——
Pierre. Speak not of her?
Jaff. Oh, no! nor name her!
Pierre. May be I wish her well.
Jaff. Whom well?
Pierre. Thy wife; thy lovely Belvidera.
I hope, a man may wish his friend's wife well,
And no harm done?
Jaff. You're merry, Pierre.
Pierre. I am so:
Thou shalt smile too, and Belvidera smile:
We'll all rejoice. Here's something to buy pins;
Marriage is chargeable. [*Gives him a Purse.*
Jaff. I but half wish'd
To see the devil, and he's here already! Well!
What must this buy? Rebellion, murder, treason?
Tell me which way I must be damn'd for this.
Pierre. When last we parted, we'd no qualms like these,
But entertain'd each other's thoughts, like men
Whose souls were well acquainted. Is the world
Reform'd since our last meeting? What new miracles
Have happen'd? Has Priuli's heart relented?
Can he be honest?
Jaff. Kind Heaven, let heavy curses
Gall his old age, till life become his burden;
Let him groan under't long, linger an age
In the worst agonies and pangs of death,
And find its ease, but late!
Pierre. Nay, couldst thou not
As well, my friend, have stretch'd the curse to all
The senate round, as to one single villain?

Jaff. But curses stick not; could I kill with cursing,
By Heaven, I know not thirty heads in Venice
Should not be blasted! Senators should rot,
Like dogs, on dunghills; Oh, for a curse
To kill with!
Pierre. Daggers, daggers are much better.
Jaff. Ha!
Pierre. Daggers.
Jaff. But where are they?
Pierre. Oh! a thousand
May be dispos'd, in honest hands, in Venice.
Jaff. Thou talk'st in clouds.
Pierre. But yet a heart, half wrong'd
As thine has been, would find the meaning, Jaffier!
Jaff. A thousand daggers, all in honest hands!
And have not I a friend will stick one here?
Pierre. Yes, if I thought thou wert not to be cherish'd
To a nobler purpose, I would be that friend:
But thou hast better friends; friends, whom thy wrongs
Have made thy friends; friends, worthy to be call'd so.
I'll trust thee with a secret. There are spirits
This hour at work. But, as thou'rt a man,
Whom I have pick'd and chosen from the world,
Swear that thou wilt be true to what I utter;
And when I've told thee that, which only gods,
And men like gods, are privy to, then swear,
No chance, or change, shall wrest it from thy bosom.
Jaff. When thou wouldst bind me, is there need of oaths?
Is coward, fool, or villain, in my face!
If I seem none of these, I dare believe
Thou wouldst not use me in a little cause;
For I am fit for honour's toughest task;
Nor ever yet found fooling was my province:
And, for a villanous, inglorious, enterprize,

I know thy heart so well, I dare lay mine
Before thee, set it to what point thou wilt.
Pierre. Nay, 'tis a cause thou wilt be fond of, Jaffier;
For it is founded on the noblest basis;
Our liberties, our natural inheritance!
We'll do the business, and ne'er fast and pray for't;
Openly act a deed, the world may gaze
With wonder at, and envy when 'tis done.
Jaff. For liberty!
Pierre. For liberty, my friend.
Thou shalt be freed from base Priuli's tyranny,
And thy sequester'd fortunes heal'd again:
I shall be free from those opprobrious wrongs,
That press me now, and bend my spirit downward;
All Venice free, and every growing merit
Succeed to its just right; fools shall be pull'd
From wisdom's seat; those baleful unclean birds,
Those lazy owls, who, perch'd near fortune's top,
Sit only watchful with their heavy wings
To cuff down new-fledg'd virtues, that would rise
To nobler heights, and make the grove harmonious.
Jaff. What can I do?
Pierre. Canst thou not kill a senator?
Jaff. By all my wrongs, thou talk'st as if revenge
Were to be had! and the brave story warms me.
Pierre. Swear then!
Jaff. I do, by all those glittering stars,
And yon great ruling planet of the night!
By all good spirits above, and ill below;
By love and friendship, dearer than my life,
No pow'r, nor death, shall make me false to thee!
Pierre. Here we embrace, and I'll unlock my heart.
A council's held hard by, where the destruction
Of this great empire's hatching; there I'll lead thee.
But be a man; for thou'rt to mix with men
Fit to disturb the peace of all the world,
And rule it when 'tis wildest.
Jaff. I give thee thanks

For this kind warning. Yes, I'll be a man;
And charge thee, Pierre, whene'er thou seest my fears
Betray me less, to rip this heart of mine
Out of my breast, and show it for a coward's.
Come, let's begone, for from this hour I chase
All little thoughts, all tender human follies
Out of my bosom: Vengeance shall have room—
Revenge!

Pierre. And liberty!

Jaff. Revenge! revenge! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in the House of AQUILINA.

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Why was my choice ambition? The worst ground
A wretch can build on! 'tis, indeed, at distance,
A goodly prospect, tempting to the view;
The height delights us, and the mountain top
Looks beautiful, because 'tis nigh to heaven;
But we ne'er think how sandy's the foundation,
What storm will batter, and what tempest shake us.
Who's there?

Enter SPINOSA.

Spin. Renault, good-morrow, for by this time,
I think, the scale of night has turn'd the balance,
And weighs up morning: Has the clock struck twelve?

Ren. Yes; clocks will go as they are set: but man,
Irregular man's ne'er constant, never certain.
I've spent at least three precious hours of darkness

In waiting dull attendance; 'tis the curse
Of diligent virtue to be mix'd, like mine,
With giddy tempers, souls but half resolv'd.
Spin. Hell seize that soul amongst us it can frighten!
Ren. What's then the cause that I am here alone
Why are we not together?

Enter ELLIOT.

O, sir, welcome!
You are an Englishman: when treason's hatching,
One might have thought you'd not have been behind hand.
In what whore's lap have you been lolling?
Give but an Englishman his whore and ease,
Beef and a sea-coal fire, he's yours for ever.
Elliot. Frenchman, you are saucy.
Ren. How? [*Puts his hand to his Sword.*

Enter BEDAMAR, MEZZANA, DURAND, *and* THEODORE.

Beda. At difference? fie!
Is this a time for quarrels? Thieves and rogues
Fall out and brawl: should men of your high calling,
Men, separated by the choice of Providence
From the gross heap of mankind, and set here
In this assembly, as in one great jewel,
T'adorn the bravest purpose it e'er smiled on;
Should you, like boys, wrangle for trifles?
Ren. Boys!
Beda. Renault, thy hand.
Ren. I thought I'd given my heart,
Long since, to every man that mingles here;
But grieve to find it trusted with such tempers,
That can't forgive my froward age its weakness.
Beda. Elliot, thou once hadst virtue. I have seen
Thy stubborn temper bend with godlike goodness,
Not half thus courted: 'Tis thy nation's glory

To hug the foe, that offers brave alliance.
Once more, embrace, my friends—
United thus, we are the mighty engine,
Must twist this rooted empire from its basis.
Totters it not already?
Elliot. 'Would 'twere tumbling!
Beda. Nay, it shall down: this night we seal its ruin.

Enter PIERRE.

O Pierre! thou art welcome.
Come to my breast; for, by its hopes, thou look'st
Lovelily dreadful; and the fate of Venice
Seems on thy sword already. O, my Mars!
The poets that first feign'd a god of war,
Sure prophesy'd of thee!
Pierre. Friends, was not Brutus
(I mean that Brutus, who, in open senate,
Stabb'd the first Cæsar that usurp'd the world),
A gallant man?
Ren. Yes, and Catiline too;
Though story wrong his fame; for he conspir'd
To prop the reeling glory of his country:
His cause was good.
Beda. And ours as much above it,
As, Renault, thou'rt superior to Cethegus,
Or Pierre to Cassius.
Pierre. Then to what we aim at.
When do we start? Or must we talk for ever?
Beda. No, Pierre, the deed's near birth: fate seems to have set
The business up, and given it to our care;
I hope there's not a heart or hand amongst us,
But what is firm and ready.
Elliot. All.
We'll die with Bedamar.
Beda. O men,

Matchless, as will your glory be hereafter:
The game is for a matchless prize, if won;
If lost, disgraceful ruin.
Pierre. Ten thousand men are armed at your nod,
Commanded all by leaders fit to guide
A battle for the freedom of the world:
This wretched state has starv'd them in its service;
And, by your bounty quicken'd, they're resolv'd
To serve your glory, and revenge their own:
They've all their different quarters in this city,
Watch for the alarm, and grumble, 'tis so tardy.
Beda. I doubt not, friend, but thy unwearied diligence
Has still kept waking, and it shall have ease;
After this night, it is resolv'd, we meet
No more, till Venice owns us for her lords.
Pierre. How lovelily the Adriatic whore,
Dress'd in her flames, will shine! Devouring flames,
Such as shall burn her to the watery bottom,
And hiss in her foundation.
Beda. Now, if any
Amongst us, that owns this glorious cause,
Have friends or int'rest he would wish to save,
Let it be told—the general doom is seal'd;
But I'd forego the hopes of a world's empire,
Rather than wound the bowels of my friend.
Pierre. I must confess you there have touch'd my weakness.
I have a friend—hear it; and such a friend!
My heart was ne'er shut to him. Nay, I'll tell you,
He knows the very business of this hour; [*All start.*
But he rejoices in the cause, and loves it:
We've changed a vow, to live and die together,
And he's at hand, to ratify it here.
Ren. How! all betray'd!
Pierre. No; I've dealt nobly with you,
I've brought my all into the public stock:
I'd but one friend, and him I'll share amongst you:

Receive and cherish him; or if, when seen
And search'd, you find him worthless,—as my tongue
Has lodg'd this secret in his faithful breast,
To ease your fears, I wear a dagger here,
Shall rip it out again, and give you rest.
Come forth, thou only good I e'er could boast of.

Enter JAFFIER, *with a Dagger in his Hand.*

Beda. His presence bears the show of manly virtue.

Jaff. I know you'll wonder all, that thus uncall'd,
I dare approach this place of fatal councils;
But I'm amongst you, and, by Heaven, it glads me
To see so many virtues thus united
To restore justice, and dethrone oppression.
Command this steel, if you would have it quiet,
Into this breast; but, if you think it worthy
To cut the throats of reverend rogues in robes,
Send me into the curs'd assembled senate:
It shrinks not, though I meet a father there.
Would you behold the city flaming? here's
A hand, shall bear a lighted torch at noon
To th' arsenal, and set its gates on fire!

Ren. You talk this well, sir.

Jaff. Nay, by Heaven, I'll do this!
Come, come, I read distrust in all your faces:
You fear me villain, and, indeed, 'tis odd
To hear a stranger talk thus, at first meeting,
Of matters that have been so well debated:
But I come ripe with wrongs, as you with counsels.
I hate this senate—am a foe to Venice;
A friend to none, but men resolved like me
To push on mischief. Oh, did you but know me,
I need not talk thus!

Beda. Pierre, I must embrace him;
My heart beats to this man, as if it knew him.

Ren. I never lov'd these huggers.

Jaff. Still, I see
The cause delights me not. Your friends survey me,

As I were dangerous.—But I come arm'd
Against all doubts, and to your trusts will give
A pledge, worth more than all the world can pay for.
My Belvidera! Hoa! my Belvidera!

Beda. What wonder next?

Jaff. Let me entreat you, sirs,
As I have henceforth hope to call you friends,
That all but the ambassador, and this
Grave guide of councils, with my friend, that owns me,
Withdraw awhile, to spare a woman's blushes.

[*Exeunt all but* BEDAMAR, RENAULT, JAFFIER, *and* PIERRE.

Beda. Pierre, whither will this ceremony lead us?

Jaff. My Belvidera! Belvidera!

Bel. [*Within.*] Who,
Who calls so loud, at this late peaceful hour?
That voice was wont to come in gentle whispers,
And fill my ears with the soft breath of love.

Enter BELVIDERA.

Thou hourly image of my thoughts, where art thou?

Jaff. Indeed 'tis late.

Bel. Alas! where am I? whither is't you lead me?
Methinks I read distraction in your face,—
You shake and tremble too! your blood runs cold!
Heav'ns guard my love, and bless his heart with patience!

Jaff. That I have patience, let our fate bear witness,
Who has ordained it so, that thou and I,
(Thou, the divinest good man e'er possess'd,
And I, the wretched'st of the race of man),
This very hour, without one tear, must part.

Bel. Part! must we part? Oh! am I then forsaken?
Why drag you from me? whither are you going?
My dear! my life! my love!

Jaff. Oh, friends!
Bel. Speak to me!
Jaff. Take her from my heart,
She'll gain such hold else, I shall ne'er get loose.
I charge you, take her, but with tenderest care
Relieve her troubles, and assuage her sorrows.
Ren. Rise, madam, and command among your servants—
Jaff. To you, sirs, and your honours, I bequeath her,
And with her, this; whene'er I prove unworthy—
[*Gives a Dagger* to RENAULT.
You know the rest—Then strike it to her heart;
And tell her, he, who three whole happy years,
Lay in her arms, and each kind night repeated
The passionate vows of still increasing love,
Sent that reward, for all her truth and sufferings.
Bel. Oh, thou unkind one!
Have I deserv'd this from you?
Look on me, tell me, speak, thou dear deceiver,—
If I am false, accuse me; but if true,
Don't, pr'ythee don't, in poverty forsake me,
But pity the sad heart, that's torn with parting.
Yet, hear me; yet, recall me.—Jaffier,—Jaffier!
[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A Room in the House of AQUILINA.

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. I'm sacrificed! I'm sold—betray'd to shame!
Inevitable ruin has enclos'd me!
He, that should guard my virtue, has betray'd it;—
Left me—undone me! Oh, that I could hate him!—
Where shall I go? Oh, whither, whither wander?

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaff. Can Belvidera want a resting-place,
When these poor arms are open to receive her?
There was a time——

Bel. Yes, yes, there was a time,
When Belvidera's tears, her cries and sorrows,
Were not despis'd; when, if she chanced to sigh,
Or look but sad——There was, indeed, a time,
When Jaffier would have ta'en her in his arms,
Eas'd her declining head upon his breast,
And never left her, till he found the cause.
But well I know why you forsake me thus;
I am no longer fit to bear a share
In your concernments: my weak female virtue
Must not be trusted; 'tis too frail and tender.

Jaff. O Portia, Portia, what a soul was thine!

Bel. That Portia was a woman; and when Brutus,
Big with the fate of Rome (Heav'n guard thy safety!)

Conceal'd from her the labours of his mind;
She let him see her blood was great as his,
Flow'd from a spring as noble, and a heart
Fit to partake his troubles, as his love.
Fetch, fetch that dagger back, the dreadful dower
Thou gav'st last night, in parting with me; strike it
Here to my heart; and, as the blood flows from it,
Judge if it run not pure as Cato's daughter's.

Jaff. O Belvidera!

Bel. Why was I last night deliver'd to a villain?

Jaff. Ha! a villain?

Bel. Yes, to a villain! Why, at such an hour,
Meets that assembly, all made up of wretches,
That look as hell had drawn them into league?
Why, I in this hand, and in that, a dagger,
Was I deliver'd with such dreadful ceremonies?
"To you, sirs, and your honours, I bequeath her,
And with her, this: Whene'er I prove unworthy—
You know the rest—then strike it to her heart."
Oh! why's that rest conceal'd from me? Must I
Be made the hostage of a hellish trust?
For such, I know I am; that's all my value.
But, by the love and loyalty I owe thee,
I'll free thee from the bondage of these slaves!
Straight to the senate—tell them all I know,
All that I think, all that my fears inform me.

Jaff. Is this the Roman virtue? this the blood,
That boasts its purity with Cato's daughter?
Would she have e'er betray'd her Brutus?

Bel. No;
For Brutus trusted her. Wert thou so kind,
What would not Belvidera suffer for thee?

Jaff. I shall undo myself, and tell thee all—
Yet think a little, ere thou tempt me further;
Think I've a tale to tell will shake thy nature,
Melt all this boasted constancy thou talk'st of
Into vile tears and despicable sorrows:
Then, if thou shouldst betray me——

Bel. Shall I swear?

Jaff. No, do not swear: I would not violate
Thy tender nature with so rude a bond;
But, as thou hop'st to see me live my days,
And love thee long, lock this within thy breast:
I've bound myself, by all the strictest sacraments,
Divine and human——

Bel. Speak!

Jaff. To kill thy father——

Bel. My father!

Jaff. Nay, the throats of the whole senate
Shall bleed, my Belvidera. He, amongst us,
That spares his father, brother, or his friend,
Is damn'd.

Bel. Oh!

Jaff. Have a care, and shrink not even in thought:
For, if thou dost——

Bel. I know it; thou wilt kill me.
Do, strike thy sword into this bosom: lay me
Dead on the earth, and then thou wilt be safe.
Murder my father! Though his cruel nature
Has persecuted me to my undoing,
Driven me to basest wants; can I behold him,
With smiles of vengeance, butcher'd in his age?
The sacred fountain of my life destroy'd?
And canst thou shed the blood that gave me being
Nay, be a traitor too, and sell thy country!
Can thy great heart descend so vilely low,
Mix with hir'd slaves, bravos, and common stabbers,
Join with such a crew, and take a ruffian's wages,
To cut the throats of wretches as they sleep?

Jaff. Thou wrong'st me Belvidera! I've engag'd
With men of souls, fit to reform the ills
Of all mankind: there's not a heart amongst them
But's stout as death, yet honest as the nature
Of man first made, ere fraud and vice were fashions.

Bel. What's he, to whose curs'd hands last night
thou gav'st me?

Was that well done? Oh! I could tell a story,
Would rouse thy lion heart out of its den,
And make it rage with terrifying fury!
Jaff. Speak on, I charge thee!
Bel. O my love! if e'er
Thy Belvidera's peace deserved thy care,
Remove me from this place. Last night! last night!
Jaff. Distract me not, but give me all the truth!
Bel. No sooner wert thou gone, and I alone,
Left in the power of that old son of mischief;
No sooner was I laid on my sad bed,
But that vile wretch approach'd me.
Oh, how I wept and sigh'd,
And shrunk, and trembled! wish'd, in vain, for him
That should protect me! Thou, alas, wast gone!
Jaff. Patience, sweet Heaven, till I make vengeance sure!
Bel. He drew the hideous dagger forth, thou gav'st him,
And, with upbraiding smiles, he said, "Behold it:
This is the pledge of a false husband's love:"
And in my arms then press'd, and would have clasp'd me;
But with my cries I scar'd his coward heart,
Till he withdrew, and mutter'd vows to hell.
These are thy friends! with these thy life, thy honour,
Thy love, all stak'd, and all will go to ruin.
Jaff. No more; I charge thee, keep this secret close.
Clear up thy sorrows; look as if thy wrongs
Were all forgot, and treat him like a friend,
As no complaint were made. No more; retire,
Retire, my life, and doubt not of my honour;
I'll heal its failings, and deserve thy love.
Bel. Oh! should I part with thee, I fear thou wilt
In anger leave me, and return no more.
Jaff. Return no more! I would not live without thee
Another night, to purchase the creation.

Bel. When shall we meet again?
Jaff. Anon, at twelve,
I'll steal myself to thy expecting arms:
Come, like the travell'd dove, and bring thee peace.
Bel. Indeed!
Jaff. By all our loves!
Bel. 'Tis hard to part:
But sure no falsehood ever look'd so fairly.
Farewell!—remember twelve. [*Exit.*
Jaff. Let Heav'n forget me,
When I remember not thy truth, thy love!

Enter PIERRE.

Pierre. Jaffier!
Jaff. Who calls?
Pierre. A friend, that could have wish'd
T' have found thee otherwise employ'd. What, hunt
A wife, on the dull foil! Sure, a stanch husband,
Of all hounds is the dullest. Wilt thou never,
Never be wean'd from caudles and confections?
What feminine tales hast thou been list'ning to,
Of unair'd shirts? catarrhs, and tooth-ache, got
By thin-soled shoes! Damnation! that a fellow,
Chosen to be a sharer in the destruction
Of a whole people, should sneak thus in corners,
To waste his time, and fool his mind with love!
Jaff. May not a man, then, trifle out an hour
With a kind woman, and not wrong his calling?
Pierre. Not in a cause like ours.
Jaff. Then, friend, our cause
Is in a damn'd condition: for I'll tell thee,
That canker-worm, call'd lechery, has touch'd it;
'Tis tainted vilely. Would'st thou think it? Renault
(That mortify'd old wither'd winter rogue)
Loves simple fornication like a priest;
I found him out for watering at my wife;
He visited her last night, like a kind guardian:
Faith, she has some temptations, that's the truth on't.

Pierre. He durst not wrong his trust!
Jaff. 'Twas something late though,
To take the freedom of a lady's chamber.
Pierre. Was she in bed?
Jaff. Yes, 'faith! in virgin sheets,
White as her bosom, Pierre; dish'd neatly up,—
Might tempt a weaker appetite to taste.
Pierre. Patience guide me!
He used no violence?
Jaff. No, no: out on't, violence!
Play'd with her neck; brush'd her with his grey beard;
Struggled and touz'd; tickled her till she squeak'd a little,
May be, or so—but not a jot of violence——
Pierre. Damn him!
Jaff. Ay, so say I: but, hush, no more on't;
Sure it is near the hour
We all should meet for our concluding orders:
Will the ambassador be here in person?
Pierre. No, he has sent commission to that villain, Renault,
To give the executing charge:
I'd have thee be a man, if possible,
And keep thy temper: for a brave revenge
Ne'er comes too late.
Jaff. Fear not, I am cool as patience.
Pierre. He's yonder, coming this way, through the hall;
His thoughts seem full.
Jaff. Pr'ythee retire, and leave me
With him alone: I'll put him to some trial;
See how his rotten part will bear the touching.
Pierre. Be careful then.
Jaff. Nay, never doubt, but trust me.
[*Exit* PIERRE.
What! be a devil, take a damning oath
For shedding native blood? Can there be sin
In merciful repentance? Oh, this villain! [*Retires.*

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Perverse and peevish: What a slave is man,
To let his itching flesh thus get the better of him!
Despatch the tool, her husband—that were well.—
Who's there?

Jaff. A man.

Ren. My friend, my near ally,
The hostage of your faith, my beauteous charge, is very well.

Jaff. Sir, are you sure of that?
Stands she in perfect health? Beats her pulse even?
Neither too hot nor cold?

Ren. What means that question?

Jaff. Oh! women have fantastic constitutions,
Inconstant in their wishes, always wavering,
And never fix'd. Was it not boldly done,
Ev'n at first sight, to trust the thing I lov'd
(A tempting treasure too) with youth, so fierce
And vigorous as thine? but thou art honest.

Ren. Who dares accuse me?

Jaff. Curs'd be he that doubts
Thy virtue! I have try'd it, and declare,
Were I to choose a guardian of my honour,
I'd put it into thy keeping; for I know thee.

Ren. Know me!

Jaff. Ay, know thee.—There's no falsehood in thee;
Thou look'st just as thou art. Let us embrace.—
Now, wouldst thou cut my throat, or I cut thine.

Ren. You dare not do't!

Jaff. You lie, sir!

Ren. How!

Jaff. No more.—
'Tis a base world, and must reform, that's all.

Enter SPINOSA, ELLIOT, THEODORE, DURAND, *and* MEZZANA.

Ren. Spinosa, Theodore, you are welcome.

Spin. You are trembling, sir.
Ren. 'Tis a cold night, indeed; I am aged;
Full of decay, and natural infirmities.
We shall be warm, my friends, I hope, to-morrow.
[RENAULT *and the* CONSPIRATORS *retire.*

Enter PIERRE.

Pierre. 'Twas not well done; thou shouldst have strok'd him.
And not have gall'd him,
Jaff. Damn him, let him chew on't!
Heav'n! where am I? beset with cursed fiends,
That wait to damn me! what a devil's man,
When he forgets his nature!—hush, my heart.
[RENAULT *and the* CONSPIRATORS *advance.*
Ren. My friends, 'tis late: are we assembled all?
Spin. All—all!
Ren. Oh! you're men, I find,
Fit to behold your fate, and meet her summons.
To-morrow's rising sun must see you all
Deck'd in your honours. Are the soldiers ready?
Pierre. All—all!
Ren. You, Durand, with your thousand, must possess
St. Mark's; you, Captain, know your charge already;
'Tis to secure the ducal palace:
Be all this done with the least tumult possible,
Till in each place you post sufficient guards;
Then sheath your swords in every breast you meet.
Jaff. Oh, reverend cruelty! damn'd bloody villain!
Ren. During this execution, Durand, you
Must in the midst keep your battalia fast:
And, Theodore, be sure to plant the cannon
That may command the streets;
This done, we'll give the general alarm,
Apply petards, and force the ars'nal gates;
Then fire the city round in several places,
Or with our cannon, if it dare resist,

Batter to ruin. But, above all, I charge you,
Shed blood enough; spare neither sex nor age,
Name nor condition: if there lives a senator
After to-morrow, though the dullest rogue
That e'er said nothing, we have lost our ends.
If possible, let's kill the very name
Of senator, and bury it in blood.

Jaff. Merciless, horrid slave! Ay, blood enough!
Shed blood enough, old Renault! how thou charm'st me!

Ren. But one thing more, and then farewell, till fate
Join us again, or separate us ever:
But let us all remember,
We wear no common cause upon our swords.
Let each man think, that, on his single virtue,
Depends the good and fame of all the rest;—
Eternal honour, or perpetual infamy.
You droop, sir.

Jaff. No: with most profound attention
I've heard it all, and wonder at thy virtue.

Ren. Let's consider,
That we destroy oppression,—avarice;
A people nurs'd up equally with vices
And loathsome lusts, which nature most abhors,
And such as, without shame, she cannot suffer.

Jaff. Oh, Belvidera! take me to thy arms,
And show me where's my peace, for I have lost it.
[*Exit.*

Ren. Without the least remorse, then, let's resolve
With fire and sword t'exterminate these tyrants,
Under whose weight this wretched country labours.

Pierre. And may those Powers above, that are propitious
To gallant minds, record this cause, and bless it!

Ren. Thus happy, thus secure of all we wish for,
Should there, my friends, be found among us one
False to this glorious enterprise, what fate,
What vengeance, were enough for such a villain!

Elliot. Death here, without repentance, hell hereafter.

Ren. Let that be my lot, if, as here I stand,
Listed by fate among her darling sons,
Though I had one only brother, dear by all
The strictest ties of nature,
Join'd in this cause, and had but ground for fear
He meant foul play; may this right hand drop from me,
If I'd not hazard all my future peace,
And stab him to the heart before you! Who,
Who would do less? Would'st thou not, Pierre, the same!

Pierre. You've singled me, sir, out for this hard question,
As if 'twere started only for my sake;
Am I the thing you fear? Here, here's my bosom;
Search it with all your swords. Am I a traitor?

Ren. No: but I fear your late commended friend
Is little less. Come, sirs, 'tis now no time
To trifle with our safety. Where's this Jaffier?

Spin. He left the room just now, in strange disorder.

Ren. Nay, there is danger in him: I observ'd him;
During the time I took for explanation,
He was transported from most deep attention
To a confusion, which he could not smother.
What's requisite for safety, must be done
With speedy execution; he remains
Yet in our power; I, for my own part, wear
A dagger——

Pierre. Well?

Ren. And I could wish it——

Pierre. Where?

Ren. Bury'd in his heart.

Pierre. Away! we're yet all friends.—
No more of this; 'twill breed ill blood among us.

Spin. Let us all draw our swords, and search the house;

Pull him from the dark hole, where he sits brooding
O'er his cold fears, and each man kill his share of him.

Pierre. Who talks of killing? Who's he'll shed the blood,
That's dear to me? Is't you, or you, sir?
What! not one speak? how you stand gaping all
On your grave oracle, your wooden god there!
Yet not a word? then, sir, I'll tell you a secret;
Suspicion's but at best a coward's virtue.
[*To* RENAULT.

Ren. A coward!—

Pierre. Put—Put up thy sword, old man;
Thy hand shakes at it. Come, let's heal this breach;
I am too hot: we yet may all live friends.

Spin. Till we are safe, our friendship cannot be so.

Pierre. Again! Who's that?

Spin. 'Twas I.

Theod. And I.

Ren. And I.

Spin. And all.

Let's die like men, and not be sold like slaves.

Pierre. One such word more, by Heaven, I'll to the senate,
And hang ye all, like dogs, in clusters.
Why peep your coward swords half out their shells?
Why do you not all brandish them like mine?
You fear to die, and yet dare talk of killing.

Ren. Go to the senate, and betray us,—haste!
Secure thy wretched life; we fear to die
Less than thou dar'st be honest.

Pierre. That's rank falsehood.
Fear'st thou not death? Fie, there's a knavish itch
In that salt blood, an utter foe to smarting!
Had Jaffier's wife prov'd kind, he'd still been true.
Faugh—how that stinks! [*Exit* RENAULT.
Away, disperse all to your several charges,
And meet to-morrow, where your honour calls you.

I'll bring that man, whose blood you so much thirst for,
And you shall see him venture for you fairly——
Hence, hence, I say!

Spin. I fear we have been to blame,
And done too much.

Theod. 'Twas too far urged against the man you love.

Elliot. Forgive us, gallant friend.

Pierre. Nay, now you've found
The way to melt, and cast me as you will.
I'll fetch this friend, and give him to your mercy;
Nay, he shall die, if you will take him from me;
For your repose, I'll quit my heart's best jewel,
But would not have him torn away by villains,
And spiteful villany.

Spin. No; may ye both
For ever live, and fill the world with fame!

Pierre. Now you're too kind. Whence rose all this discord?
Oh! what a dangerous precipice have we 'scap'd!
How near a fall was all we'd long been building!
What an eternal blot had stain'd our glories,
If one, the bravest and the best of men,
Had fall'n a sacrifice to rash suspicion,
Butcher'd by those, whose cause he came to cherish!
Oh, could you know him all, as I have known him,
How good he is, how just, how true, how brave,
You would not leave this place, till you had seen him,
And gained remission for the worst of follies.
Come but to-morrow, all your doubts shall end,
And to your loves me better recommend,
That I've preserv'd your fame, and sav'd my friend.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

A Street.

Enter BELVIDERA *and* JAFFIER.

Jaff. Where dost thou lead me? Ev'ry step I move,
Methinks I tread upon some mangled limb
Of a rack'd friend. Oh, my dear, charming ruin!
Where are we wandering?

Bel. To eternal honour.
To do a deed, shall chronicle thy name
Among the glorious legends of those few
That have sav'd sinking nations. Every street
Shall be adorn'd with statues to thy honour:
And, at thy feet, this great inscription written,—
"Remember him, that propp'd the fall of Venice!"

Jaff. Rather, remember him, who, after all
The sacred bonds of oaths, and holier friendship,
In fond compassion to a woman's tears,
Forgot his manhood, virtue, truth, and honour,
To sacrifice the bosom that reliev'd him.
Why wilt thou damn me?

Bel. O inconstant man!
How will you promise! how will you deceive!
Do, return back, replace me in my bondage,
Tell all thy friends how dangerously thou lov'st me,
And let thy dagger do its bloody office.
Or, if thou think'st it nobler, let me live,
Till I'm a victim to the hateful will

Of that infernal devil!
Last night, my love!
Jaff. Name, name it not again:
Destruction, swift destruction, fall on my cow'ard head,
If I forgive him!
Bel. Delay no longer then, but to the senate,
And tell the dismal'st story ever utter'd;
Tell them what bloodshed, rapines, desolations,
Have been prepar'd:—how near's the fatal hour.
Save thy poor country, save the rev'rend blood
Of all its nobles, which to-morrow's dawn
Must else see shed!
Jaff. Oh!
Bel. Think what then may prove
My lot; the ravisher may then come safe,
And, 'midst the terror of the public ruin,
Do a damn'd deed.
Jaff. By all Heav'n's powers, prophetic truth dwells in thee!
For every word thou speak'st, strikes through my heart,
Like a new light, and shows it how 't has wander'd,—
Just what thou'st made me, take me, Belvidera,
And lead me to the place, where I'm to say
This bitter lesson; where I must betray
My truth, my virtue, constancy, and friends.
Must I betray my friends? Ah! take me quickly,
Secure me well before that thought's renew'd;
If I relapse once more, all's lost for ever.
Bel. Hast thou a friend more dear than Belvidera?
Jaff. No: Thou'rt my soul itself; wealth, friendship, honour;
All present joys, and earnest of all future,
Are summ'd in thee.

Enter CAPTAIN *and* GUARDS.

Capt. Stand! who goes there?
Bel. Friends.

Capt. But what friends are you?
Bel. Friends to the senate, and the state of Venice.
Capt. My orders are, to seize on all I find
At this late hour, and bring them to the council,
Who are now sitting.
Jaff. Sir, you shall be obey'd.
Now the lot's cast, and, fate, do what thou wilt.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Senate House.

The DUKE OF VENICE, PRIULI, *and* NINE *other* SENATORS *discovered sitting.*

Duke. Antony, Priuli, senators of Venice,
Speak—Why are we assembled here this night?
What have you to inform us of, concerns
The state of Venice' honour, or its safety?
Priuli. Could words express the story I've to tell you,
Fathers, these tears were useless, these sad tears
That fall from my old eyes; but there is a cause
We all should weep,
And wrap ourselves in sackcloth, sitting down
On the sad earth, and cry aloud to Heaven:
Heav'n knows, if yet there be an hour to come,
Ere Venice be no more.
Duke. How!
Priuli. Nay, we stand
Upon the very brink of gaping ruin.
Within this city's form'd a dark conspiracy
To massacre us all, our wives and children,
Kindred and friends; our palaces and temples
To lay in ashes: nay, the hour too fix'd;
The swords, for aught I know, drawn ev'n this moment,

And the wild waste begun. From unknown hands
I had this warning: but, if we are men,
Let's not be tamely butcher'd, but do something
That may inform the world, in after ages,
Our virtue was not ruin'd, though we were.

[*A Noise within.*

Capt. [*Within.*] Room, room, make room for some prisoners!

Enter OFFICER.

Duke. Speak, there! What disturbance?

Officer. A prisoner have the guards seiz'd in the street,
Who says, he comes to inform this reverend council
About the present danger.

Enter OFFICER, JAFFIER, CAPTAIN, *and* GUARDS.

All. Give him entrance.—[*Exit* OFFICER.] Well, who are you?

Jaff. A villain!
Would, every man, that hears me,
Would deal so honestly, and own his title!

Duke. 'Tis rumour'd, that a plot has been contriv'd
Against the state, and you've a share in't too.
If you're a villain, to redeem your honour,
Unfold the truth, and be restor'd with mercy.

Jaff. Think not, that I to save my life came hither;
I know its value better; but in pity
To all those wretches, whose unhappy dooms
Are fix'd and seal'd. You see me here before you,
The sworn and covenanted foe of Venice:
But use me as my dealings may deserve,
And I may prove a friend.

Duke. The slave capitulates;
Give him the tortures.

Jaff. That, you dare not do:
Your fears won't let you, nor the longing itch
To hear a story, which you dread the truth of:
Truth, which the fear of smart shall ne'er get from me.

Cowards are scar'd with threat'nings; boys are whipp'd
Into confessions: but a steady mind
Acts of itself, ne'er asks the body counsel.
Give him the tortures!—name but such a thing
Again, by Heav'n, I'll shut these lips for ever!
Nor all your racks, your engines, or your wheels,
Shall force a groan away, that you may guess at!

Duke. Name your conditions.

Jaff. For myself, full pardon,
Besides, the lives of two-and-twenty friends,
Whose names I have enrolled—Nay, let their crimes
Be ne'er so monstrous, I must have the oaths,
And sacred promise, of this reverend council,
That, in a full assembly of the senate,
The thing I ask, be ratify'd. Swear this,
And I'll unfold the secrets of your danger.

Duke. Propose the oath.

Jaff. By all the hopes
You have of peace and happiness hereafter,
Swear!

Duke. We swear.

Jaff. And, as ye keep the oath,
May you and your posterity be bless'd,
Or curs'd, for ever!

Duke. Else be curs'd for ever!

Jaff. Then here's the list, and with it, the full disclose

[*Delivers two Papers to the* OFFICER, *who delivers them to the* DUKE.

Of all that threaten you.
Now, Fate, thou hast caught me!

Duke. Give order, that all diligent search be made
To seize these men, their characters are public.
The paper intimates their rendezvous
To be at the house of the fam'd Grecian courtesan,
Call'd Aquilina; see the place secur'd.
You, Jaffier, must with patience bear till morning
To be our prisoner.

Jaff. Would the chains of death
Had bound me fast, ere I had known this minute!
Duke. Captain, withdraw your prisoner.
Jaff. Sir, if possible,
Lead me where my own thoughts themselves may lose me;
Where I may doze out, what I've left of life;—
Forget myself, and this day's guilt and falsehood.
Cruel remembrance! how shall I appease thee?
[*Exit guarded.*
Officer. [*Without.*] More traitors! room, room, make room there!
Duke. How's this?
The treason's
Already at the doors!

Enter OFFICER *and* CAPTAIN.

Officer. My lords, more traitors!
Seiz'd in the very act of consultation:
Furnish'd with arms and instruments of mischief.—
Bring in the prisoners!

Enter SPINOSA, ELLIOT, THEODORE, DURAND, MEZZANA, RENAULT, *and* PIERRE, *in Chains.*

Pierre. You, my lords, and fathers,
(As you are pleas'd to call yourselves) of Venice;
If you sit here to guide the course of justice,
Why these disgraceful chains upon the limbs
That have so often labour'd in your service?
Are these the wreaths of triumph you bestow
On those that bring you conquest home, and honours?
Duke. Go on! you shall be heard, sir.
Pierre. Are these the trophies I've deserv'd for fighting
Your battles with confederated powers?
When winds and seas conspir'd to overthrow you,
And brought the fleets of Spain to your own harbours;

When you, great duke, shrunk trembling in your palace,
And saw your wife, the Adriatic, ploughed,
Like a lewd whore, by bolder prows than yours;
Stepp'd not I forth, and taught your loóse Venetians
The task of honour, and the way to greatness?
Rais'd you from your capitulating fears
To stipulate the terms of sued-for peace?
And this my recompense! If I'm a traitor,
Produce my charge; or show the wretch that's base
And brave enough to tell me, I'm a traitor!

Duke. Know you one Jaffier?

Pierre. Yes, and know his virtue.
His justice, truth, his general worth, and sufferings
From a hard father, taught me first to love him.

Duke. See him brought forth.

Enter CAPTAIN *and* JAFFIER *in Chains.*

Pierre. My friend too bound! nay, then
Our fate has conquer'd us, and we must fall.
Why droops the man, whose welfare's so much mine,
They're but one thing? These reverend tyrants, Jaffier,
Call us traitors. Art thou one, my brother?

Jaff. To thee I am the falsest, veriest slave;
That e'er betray'd a generous, trusting friend,
And gave up honour to be sure of ruin.
All our fair hopes, which morning was t'have crown'd,
Has this curs'd tongue o'erthrown.

Pierre. So, then all's over:
Venice has lost her freedom, I my life.
No more!

Duke. Say; will you make confession
Of your vile deeds, and trust the senate's mercy?

Pierre. Curs'd be your senate, curs'd your constitution!
The curse of growing factions, and divisions,

Still vex your councils, shake your public safety,
And make the robes of government you wear
Hateful to you, as these base chains to me.
Duke. Pardon, or death?
Pierre. Death! honourable death!
Ren. Death's the best thing we ask, or you can give.
No shameful bonds, but honourable death!
Duke. Break up the council. Captain, guard your prisoners.
Jaffier, you're free, but these must wait for judgment.
[*Exeunt* DUKE, SENATORS, CONSPIRATORS, *and* OFFICER.
Pierre. Come, where's my dungeon? Lead me to my straw:
It will not be the first time I've lodged hard,
To do your senate service.
Jaff. Hold one moment.
Pierre. Who's he disputes the judgment of the senate?
Presumptuous rebel!—on—— [*Strikes* JAFFIER.
Jaff. By Heaven, you stir not!
[*Exeunt* CAPTAIN *and* GUARDS.
I must be heard; I must have leave to speak.
Thou hast disgrac'd me, Pierre, by a vile blow:
Had not a dagger done thee nobler justice?
But use me as thou wilt, thou can'st not wrong me,
For I am fallen beneath the basest injuries;
Yet look upon me with an eye of mercy,
And, as there dwells a godlike nature in thee,
Listen with mildness to my supplications.
Pierre. What whining monk art thou? what holy cheat,
That wouldst encroach upon my credulous ears,
And cant'st thus vilely! Hence! I know thee not!
Jaff. Not know me, Pierre!
Pierre. No, know thee not. What art thou?
Jaff. Jaffier, thy friend, thy once lov'd, valu'd friend!
Tho' now deservedly scorn'd, and us'd most hardly.

Pierre. Thou, Jaffier! thou my once-lov'd, valu'd friend!
By Heav'ns, thou ly'st; the man so call'd my friend,
Was generous, honest, faithful, just, and valiant;
Noble in mind, and in his person lovely;
Dear to my eyes, and tender to my heart:
But thou, a wretched, base, false, worthless, coward,
Poor, even in soul, and loathsome in thy aspect:
All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest thee.
Pr'ythee avoid, nor longer cling thus round me,
Like something baneful, that my nature's chill'd at.
Jaff. I have not wrong'd thee; by these tears I have not.
Pierre. Hast thou not wrong'd me? Dar'st thou call thyself
That once-lov'd, honest, valu'd friend of mine,
And swear thou hast not wrong'd me? Whence these chains?
Whence the vile death which I may meet this moment?
Whence this dishonour, but from thee, thou false one?
Jaff. All's true; yet grant one thing, and I've done asking.
Pierre. What's that?
Jaff. To take thy life, on such conditions
The council have propos'd: thou, and thy friends,
May yet live long, and to be better treated.
Pierre. Life! ask my life! confess! record myself
A villain, for the privilege to breathe,
And carry up and down this cursed city,
A discontented and repining spirit,
Burdensome to itself, a few years longer!
To lose it, may be, at last, in a lewd quarrel
For some new friend, treacherous and false as thou art!
No, this vile world and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better terms than now,
When only men like thee are fit to live in't.
Jaff. By all that's just——
Pierre. Swear by some other power,

For thou hast broke that sacred oath too lately.
Jaff. Then by that hell I merit, I'll not leave thee
Till, to thyself at least, thou'rt reconciled,
However thy resentments deal with me.
Pierre. Not leave me!
Jaff. No; thou shalt not force me from thee.
Use me reproachfully, and like a slave;
Tread on me, buffet me, heap wrongs on wrongs
On my poor head; I'll bear it all with patience,
Shall weary out thy most unfriendly cruelty;
Lie at thy feet, and kiss them, tho' they spurn me;
Till, wounded by my sufferings, thou relent,
And raise me to thy arms with dear forgiveness.
Pierre. Art thou not——
Jaff. What?
Pierre. A traitor?
Jaff. Yes.
Pierre. A villain?
Jaff. Granted.
Pierre. A coward, a most scandalous coward;
Spiritless, void of honour; one who has sold
Thy everlasting fame for shameless life!
Jaff. All, all, and more, much more; my faults are numberless.
Pierre. And wouldst thou have me live on terms like thine?
Base, as thou'rt false——
Jaff. No; 'tis to me that's granted;
The safety of thy life was all I aim'd at,
In recompense for faith and trust so broken.
Pierre. I scorn it more, because preserv'd by thee;
And, as when first my foolish heart took pity
On thy misfortunes, sought thee in thy miseries,
Reliev'd thy wants, and rais'd thee from the state
Of wretchedness, in which thy fate had plung'd thee,
To rank thee in my list of noble friends;
All I receiv'd, in surety for thy truth,
Were unregarded oaths, and this, this dagger,

Given with a worthless pledge, thou since hast stol'n:
So I restore it back to thee again;
Swearing by all those powers which thou hast violated,
Never from this curs'd hour, to hold communion,
Friendship, or interest, with thee, though our years
Were to exceed those limited the world.
Take it—farewell—for now I owe thee nothing.

Jaff. Say, thou wilt live then.

Pierre. For my life, dispose it
Just as thou wilt, because 'tis what I'm tir'd with.

Jaff. O Pierre!

Pierre. No more.

Jaff. My eyes won't lose the sight of thee,
But languish after thine, and ache with gazing.

Pierre. Leave me—Nay, then thus, thus I throw
thee from me;
And curses, great as is thy falsehood, catch thee!
[*Exit.*

Jaff. He's gone, my father, friend, preserver;
And here's the portion he has left me;
This dagger. Well remembered! with this dagger,
I gave a solemn vow of dire importance;
Parted with this, and Belvidera together.
Have a care, mem'ry, drive that thought no farther:
No, I'll esteem it, as a friend's last legacy;
Treasure it up, within this wretched bosom,
Where it may grow acquainted with my heart,
That, when they meet they start not from each other.
So, now for thinking—A blow, call'd traitor, villain,
Coward, dishonourable coward; faugh!
Oh for a long round sleep, and so forget it!
Down, busy devil.

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. Whither shall I fly?
Where hide me and my miseries together?
Where's now the Roman constancy I boasted!
Sunk into trembling fears and desperation,

Not daring to look up to that dear face,
Which us'd to smile, even on my faults; but, down
Bending these miserable eyes to earth,
Must move in penance, and implore much mercy.

Jaff. Mercy! kind Heaven has surely endless stores
Hoarded for thee, of blessings yet untasted:
Let wretches loaded hard with guilt as I am,
Bow with the weight, and groan beneath the burden,
Before the footstool of that Heav'n they've injur'd.
O Belvidera! I'm the wretched'st creature
E'er crawl'd on earth.

Bel. Alas! I know thy sorrows are most mighty.

Jaff. My friend too, Belvidera, that dear friend,
Who, next to thee, was all my health rejoic'd in,
Has us'd me like a slave, shamefully us'd me:
'Twould break thy pitying heart to hear the story.

Bel. What has he done?

Jaff. O my dear angel! in that friend, I've lost
All my soul's peace; for every thought of him
Strikes my sense hard, and deads it in my brains!
Wouldst thou believe it?
Before we parted,
Ere yet his guards had led him to his prison,
Full of severest sorrows for his sufferings,
As at his feet, I kneel'd, and sued for mercy,
With a reproachful hand he dash'd a blow:
He struck me, Belvidera! by Heaven he struck me!
Buffeted, call'd me traitor, villain, coward.
Am I a coward? am I a villain? tell me:
Thou'rt the best judge, and mad'st me, if I am so?
Damnation! coward!

Bel. Oh! forgive him, Jaffier;
And, if his sufferings wound thy heart already,
What will they do to-morrow?

Jaff. Ah!

Bel. To-morrow,
When thou shalt see him stretch'd in all the agonies
Of a tormenting and a shameful death;

What will thy heart do then? Oh! sure 'twill stream,
Like my eyes now.
Jaff. What means thy dreadful story?
Death and to-morrow?
Bel. The faithless senators, 'tis they've decreed it,
They say, according to our friends' request,
They shall have death, and not ignoble bondage;
Declare their promised mercy all as forfeited:
False to their oaths, and deaf to intercession,
Warrants are pass'd for public death to-morrow.
Jaff. Death! doom'd to die! condemn'd unheard!
unpleaded!
Bel. Nay, cruel'st racks and torments are preparing
To force confession from their dying pangs.
Oh! do not look so terribly upon me!
How your lips shake, and all your face disorder'd!
What means my love?
Jaff. Leave me, I charge thee, leave me!—Strong
temptations
Wake in my heart.
Bel. For what?
Jaff. No more, but leave.
Bel. Why?
Jaff. Oh! by Heav'n I love thee with that fond-
ness,
I would not have thee stay a moment longer
Near these cursed hands.
[*Pulls the Dagger half out of his Bosom, and puts it back again.*
Art thou not terrified?
Bel. No.
Jaff. Call to mind
What thou hast done, and whither thou hast brought
me.
Bel. Hah!
Jaff. Where's my friend? my friend, thou smiling
mischief!
Nay, shrink not, now 'tis too late; for dire revenge

Is up, and raging for my friend. He groans!
Hark, how he groans! his screams are in my ears!
Already, see, they've fix'd him on the wheel,
And now they tear him—Murder! perjur'd senate!
Murder—Oh!—Hark thee, traitress, thou hast done this!
Thanks to thy tears, thou false persuading love.
How her eyes speak! oh, thou bewitching creature!
Madness can't hurt thee. Come, thou little trembler,
Creep even into my heart, and there lie safe;
'Tis thy own citadel—Hah—yet stand off,
Heav'n must have justice, and my broken vows
Will sink me else beneath its reaching mercy.
I'll wink, and then 'tis done——

Bel. What means the lord
Of me, my life, and love? What's in thy bosom,
Thou grasp'st at so?

[JAFFIER *draws the Dagger, and offers to stab her.*

Ah! do not kill me, Jaffier.

Jaff. Know, Belvidera, when we parted last,
I gave this dagger with thee, as in trust,
To be thy portion if I e'er proved false.
On such condition was my truth believed:
But now 'tis forfeited, and must be paid for.

[*Offers to stab her again.*

Bel. Oh! mercy!

Jaff. Nay, no struggling.

Bel. Now, then, kill me,

[*Leaps on his Neck, and kisses him.*

While thus I cling about thy cruel neck,
Kiss thy revengeful lips, and die in joys
Greater than any I can guess hereafter.

Jaff. I am, I am a coward, witness, Heav'n,
Witness it, earth, and ev'ry being witness:
'Tis but one blow! yet, by immortal love,
I cannot longer bear a thought to harm thee.

[*He throws away the Dagger, and embraces her.*

The seal of Providence is sure upon thee;
And thou wast born for yet unheard-of wonders.
Oh! thou wert either born to save or damn me!
By all the power that's given thee o'er my soul,
By thy resistless tears and conquering smiles,
By thy victorious love that still waits on thee,
Fly to thy cruel father, save my friend,
Or all our future quiet's lost for ever.
Fall at his feet, cling round his rev'rend knees,
Speak to him with thy eyes, and with thy tears
Melt his hard heart, and wake dead nature in him,
Nor, till thy prayers are granted, set him free,
But conquer him, as thou hast vanquish'd me.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in PRIULI'S *House.*

Enter PRIULI.

Priuli. Why, cruel Heav'n, have my unhappy days
Been lengthen'd to this sad one? Oh! dishonour,
And deathless infamy have fall'n upon me.
Was it my fault? Am I a traitor? No.
But then, my only child, my daughter wedded;
There my best blood runs foul, and a disease
Incurable has seiz'd upon my memory.

Enter BELVIDERA, *in a Mourning Veil.*

Bel. He's there, my father, my inhuman father,
That, for three years, has left an only child,
Expos'd to all the outrages of fate,
And cruel ruin!—Oh!——

Priuli. What child of sorrow
Art thou, that comst, wrap't up in weeds of sadness,
And mov'st as if thy steps were towards a grave?

Bel. A wretch, who from the very top of happiness,
Am fallen into the lowest depths of misery,
And want your pitying hand to raise me up again.

Priuli. What wouldst thou beg for?

Bel. Pity and forgiveness. [*Throws up her Veil.*
By the kind tender names of child and father,
Hear my complaints, and take me to your love.

Priuli. My daughter!

Bel. Yes, your daughter; and you've oft told me,
With smiles of love, and chaste paternal kisses,
I'd much resemblance of my mother.

Priuli. Don't talk thus.

Bel. Yes, I must: and you must hear too.
I have a husband.

Priuli. Damn him!

Bel. Oh, do not curse him!
He would not speak so hard a word towards you,
On any terms, howe'er he deal with me.

Priuli. Ah! what means my child?

Bel. Oh! my husband, my dear husband,
Carries a dagger in his once kind bosom,
To pierce the heart of your poor Belvidera!

Priuli. Kill thee!

Bel. Yes, kill me. When he passed his faith
And covenant against your state and senate,
He gave me up a hostage for his truth:
With me a dagger, and a dire commission,
Whene'er he fail'd, to plunge it through this bosom.

I learnt the danger, chose the hour of love
T' attempt his heart, and bring it back to honour.
Great love prevail'd, and bless'd me with success!
He came, confess'd, betray'd his dearest friends,
For promis'd mercy. Now, they're doom'd to suffer;
Gall'd with remembrance of what then was sworn,
If they are lost, he vows t' appease the gods
With this poor life, and make my blood th' atonement.

Priuli. Heavens!

Bel. If I was ever then your care, now hear me!
Fly to the senate, save the promis'd lives
Of his dear friends, ere mine be made the sacrifice.

Priuli. Oh, my heart's comfort!

Bel. Will you not, my father?
Weep not, but answer me.

Priuli. By Heav'n, I will!
Not one of them but what shall be immortal!
Canst thou forgive me all my follies past?
I'll henceforth be indeed a father! never,
Never more, thus expose, but cherish thee,
Dear as the vital warmth that feeds my life;
Dear as these eyes, that weep in fondness o'er thee:
Peace to thy heart. Farewell!

Bel. Go, and remember,
'Tis Belvidera's life her father pleads for! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Rialto.

Enter CAPTAIN,
Muffled Drums.
GUARDS,
EXECUTIONER, *with Axe,*
RENAULT,
SPINOSA,
ELILOT,
THEODORE,
DURAND,
MEZZANA,
PIERRE,
OFFICER,
GUARDS.

They all pass over the Stage, and exeunt.

SCENE III.

A Street.

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaff. Final destruction seize on all the world!
Bend down, ye Heav'ns, and, shutting round this earth,
Crush the vile globe into its first confusion!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. My life!——
Jaff. My plague!——

Bel. Nay, then I see my ruin.
If I must die!
Jaff. No, death's this day too busy;
Thy father's ill-timed mercy came too late.
I thank thee for thy labours, though; and him too.
But all my poor, betrayed, unhappy friends,
Have summons to prepare for fate's black hour.
Yet, Belvidera, do not fear my cruelty,
Nor let the thoughts of death perplex thy fancy:
But answer me to what I shall demand,
With a firm temper, and unshaken spirit.
Bel. I will, when I've done weeping——
Jaff. Fie, no more on't!——
How long is't since the miserable day
We wedded first?
Bel. Oh! oh!
Jaff. Nay, keep in thy tears,
Lest they unman me too.
Bel. Heaven knows I cannot!
The words you utter sound so very sadly,
The streams will follow——
Jaff. Come, I'll kiss them dry then.
Bel. But was't a miserable day?
Jaff. A curs'd one!
Bel. I thought it otherwise; and you have often sworn,
When sure you spoke the truth, you've sworn, you bless'd it.
Jaff. 'Twas a rash oath.
Bel. Then why am I not curs'd too?
Jaff. No, Belvidera; by th' eternal truth,
I dote with too much fondness.
Bel. Still so kind!
Still then do you love me?
Jaff. Man ne'er was bless'd,
Since the first pair first met, as I have been.
Bel. Then sure you will not curse me?
Jaff. No, I'll bless thee.

I came on purpose, Belvidera, to bless thee.
'Tis now, I think, three years, we've liv'd together.
Bel. And may no fatal minute ever part us,
Till reverend grown, for age and love, we go
Down to one grave, as our last bed, together;
There sleep in peace, till an eternal morning.
Jaff. Did not I say, I came to bless thee?
Bel. You did.
Jaff. Then hear me, bounteous Heaven!
Pour down your blessings on this beauteous head,
Where everlasting sweets are always springing,
With a continual giving hand: let peace,
Honour, and safety, always hover round her;
Feed her with plenty; let her eyes ne'er see
A sight of sorrow, nor her heart know mourning;
Crown all her days with joy, her nights with rest,
Harmless as her own thoughts; and prop her virtue,
To bear the loss of one that too much lov'd;
And comfort her with patience in our parting!
Bel. How? parting, parting!
Jaff. Yes, for ever parting!
I have sworn, Belvidera, by yon Heav'n,
That best can tell how much I lose to leave thee,
We part this hour for ever!
Bel. Oh! call back
Your cruel blessing; stay with me, and curse me.
Jaff. Now hold, heart, or never!
Bel. By all the tender days we've liv'd together,
Pity my sad condition; speak, but speak!
Jaff. Murder! unhold me:
Or by th' immortal destiny that doom'd me
[*Draws his Dagger.*
To this curs'd minute, I'll not live one longer!
Resolve to let me go, or see me fall——
Hark! the dismal bell [*Passing Bell tolls.*
Tolls but for death! I must attend its call too;
For my poor friend, my dying Pierre, expects me;
He sent a message to require I'd see him

Before he died, and take his last forgiveness."
Farewell for ever!
Bel. Leave thy dagger with me;
Bequeath me something—Not one kiss at parting!
Oh, my poor heart, when wilt thou break?
Jaff. Yet stay:
We have a child, as yet a tender infant:
Be a kind mother to him when I'm gone;
Breed him in virtue, and the paths of honour,
But never let him know his father's story;
I charge thee, guard him from the wrongs my fate
May do his future fortune or his name.
Now—nearer yet—
Oh, that my arms were riveted
Thus round thee ever! But my friends! my oath!
This, and no more! [*Kisses her.*
Bel. Another, sure another,
For that poor little one, you've ta'en such care of;
I'll give't him truly.
Jaff. So—now, farewell!
Bel. For ever?
Jaff. Heav'n knows, for ever! all good angels guard thee! [*Exit.*
Bel. All ill ones, sure, had charge of me this moment!
Oh, give me daggers, fire, or water!
How I could bleed, how burn, how drown, the waves
Huzzing and foaming round my sinking head,
Till I descended to the peaceful bottom!
Oh! there's all quiet—here, all rage and fury!
The air's too thin, and pierces my weak brain;
I long for thick substantial sleep: Hell! hell!
Burst from the centre, rage and roar aloud,
If thou art half so hot, so mad as I am! [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

St. Mark's Place.

A Scaffold, and a Wheel, prepared for the Execution of PIERRE.

Enter CAPTAIN, PIERRE, GUARDS, EXECUTIONER, *and* RABBLE.

Pierre. My friend not yet come?

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaff. Oh, Pierre! [*Falling on his Knees.*

Pierre. Dear to my arms, though thou'st undone my fame,
I can't forget to love thee. Pr'ythee, Jaffier,
Forgive that filthy blow, my passion dealt thee;
I am now preparing for the land of peace,
And fain would have the charitable wishes
Of all good men, like thee, to bless my journey.

Capt. The time grows short; your friends are dead already.

Jaff. Dead!

Pierre. Yes, dead, Jaffier! they've all died like men too,
Worthy their character.

Jaff. And what must I do?

Pierre. Oh, Jaffier!

Jaff. Speak aloud thy burden'd soul,
And tell thy troubles to thy tortur'd friend.

Pierre. Friend! Couldst thou yet be a friend, a generous friend,
I might hope comfort from thy noble sorrows.
Heaven knows, I want a friend!

Jaff. And I a kind one,
That would not thus scorn my repenting virtue,
Or think, when he's to die, my thoughts are idle.
Pierre. No! live, I charge thee, Jaffier.
Jaff. Yes, I will live:
But it shall be to see thy fall reveng'd,
At such a rate, as Venice long shall groan for.
Pierre. Wilt thou?
Jaff. I will, by Heaven!
Pierre. Then still thou'rt noble,
And I forgive thee. Oh!—yet—shall I trust thee?
Jaff. No; I've been false already.
Pierre. Dost thou love me?
Jaff. Rip up my heart, and satisfy thy doubtings.
Pierre. Curse on this weakness!
Jaff. Tears! Amazement! Tears!
I never saw thee melted thus before;
And know there's something labouring in thy bosom,
That must have vent; though I'm a villain, tell me.
Pierre. Seest thou that engine?
[*Pointing to the Wheel.*
Jaff. Why?
Pierre. Is't fit a soldier, who has liv'd with honour,
Fought nations' quarrels, and been crown'd with conquest,
Be exposed, a common carcase, on a wheel?
Jaff. Hah!
Pierre. Speak! is't fitting?
Jaff. Fitting!
Pierre. I'd have thee undertake
Something that's noble, to preserve my memory
From the disgrace that's ready to attaint it.
Capt. The day grows late, sir,
Pierre. I'll make haste. Oh, Jaffier!
Though thou'st betray'd me, do me some way justice.
Jaff. What's to be done?
Pierre. This and no more. [*He whispers* JAFFIER.
Jaff. Hah! is't then so?

Pierre. Most certainly.
Jaff. I'll do't.
Pierre. Remember.
Capt. Sir——
Pierre. Come, now I'm ready.
Captain, you should be a gentleman of honour;
Keep off the rabble, that I may have room
To entertain my fate, and die with decency.
You'll think on't? [*To* JAFFIER.
Jaff. 'Twon't grow stale before to-morrow.
[PIERRE *and* JAFFIER *ascend the Scaffold.*—
EXECUTIONER *binds* PIERRE.
Pierre. Now, Jaffier! now I'm going! Now—
Jaff. Have at thee,
Thou honest heart, then!—here— [*Stabs him.*
And this is well too. [*Stabs himself.*
Pierre. Now thou hast indeed been faithful!
This was done nobly!—We have deceiv'd the senate,
Jaff. Bravely!
Pierre. Ha! ha! ha!—oh! oh! [*Dies.*
Jaff. Now, ye curs'd rulers,
Thus of the blood ye've shed, I make libation,
And sprinkle it mingling. May it rest upon you,
And all your race. Oh, poor Belvidera!
Sir, I have a wife; bear this in safety to her,
A token that, with my dying breath, I bless'd her,
And the dear little infant left behind me.
I'm sick—I'm quiet. [*Dies.*
[*The Scene shuts upon them.*

SCENE V.

An Apartment in PRIULI'S *House.*

Enter PRIULI; BELVIDERA, *distracted*; *and Two of her* WOMEN.

Priuli. Strengthen her heart with patience, pitying Heav'n!
Bel. Come, come, come, come, come; nay, come to bed,
Pr'ythee, my love. The winds! hark how they whistle!
And the rain beats! Oh, how the weather shrinks me!
I say you shall not go, you shall not:
Whip your ill-nature; get you gone, then; Oh!
Are you return'd? See, father, here he's come again!
Am I to blame to love him? O, thou dear one!
Why do you fly me? Are you angry still, then?
Jaffier, where art thou? Father, why do you do thus?
Stand off! don't hide him from me! He's there somewhere.
Stand off, I say! What, gone? Remember, tyrant,
I may revenge myself for this trick, one day.

Enter CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD, *and whispers* PRIULI.

Priuli. News? what news?
Capt. Most sad, sir:
Jaffier, upon the scaffold, to prevent
A shameful death, stabb'd Pierre, and next himself;
Both fell together.

Bel. Ha! look there!
My husband bloody, and his friend too!
Who has done this? Speak to me, thou s
On these poor trembling knees, I beg it. V
Here they went down—Oh, I'll dig, dig t
Hoa, Jaffier, Jaffier!
Peep up, and give me but a look. I ha
I have got him, father! Oh!
My love! my dear! my blessing! help
me!
They have hold of me, and drag me to the bottom!
Nay—now they pull so hard—farewell—— [*Dies.*
Priuli. Oh! lead me into some place, that's fit
for mourning;
Where the free air, light, and the cheerful sun,
May never enter; hang it round with black,
Set up one taper, that may light a day,
As long as I've to live; and there all leave me:
Sparing no tears, when you this tale relate,
But bid all cruel fathers dread my fate.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE END.

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CONSCIOUS LOVERS

Mrs SEALAND. RISE RISE MY CHILD AND GIVE MY TEARS THEIR WAY.

Act V. Scene III.

Drawn by C.Heath. Published by Longman & C.º 1816. Engraved by C.Heath.

THE

CONSCIOUS LOVERS;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

By SIR RICHARD STEELE.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRES ROYAL,

COVENT GARDEN AND DRURY LANE.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS INCHBALD.

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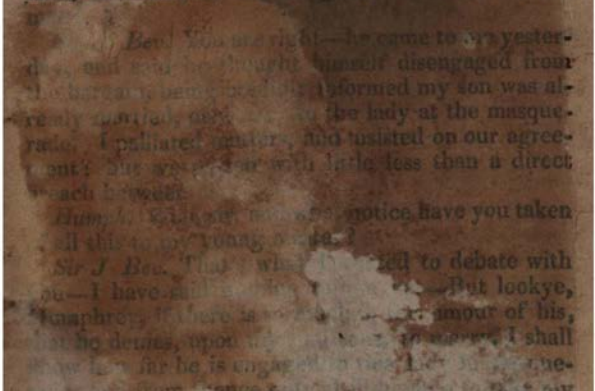
when raising her in his arms, "Art thou gone," cried he, "for ever——forbid it, Heaven!"—She revives at his known voice—and with the most familiar, though modest gesture, hangs on his shoulder weeping, but wept as in the arms of one before whom she could give herself a loose, were she not under observation; while she hides her face in his neck, he carefully conveys her from the company.

Humph. I have observed this accident has dwelt upon you very strongly.

Sir J. Bev. Her uncommon air, her noble modesty, the dignity of her person, and the occasion itself, drew the whole assembly together; and I soon heard it buzzed about she was the adopted daughter of a famous sea-officer, who had served in France. Now this unexpected and public discovery of my son's so deep concern for her——

Humph. Was what, I suppose, alarmed Mr Sealand, in behalf of his daughter, to break off the



measures; in the mean time, I would have you find out how far that rogue, his man, is let into his secret—

he, I know, will play tricks as much to cross me as to serve his master.

Humph. Why do you think so of him, sir? I believe he is no worse than I was for you at your son's age.

Sir J. Bev. I see it in the rascal's looks. I'll go to my son immediately, and while I'm gone, your part is to convince his rogue, Tom, that I am in earnest. I'll leave him to you. [*Exit.*

Humph. Well, though this father and son live as well together as possible, yet their fear of giving each other pain is attended with constant mutual uneasiness. O, here's the prince of poor coxcombs, the representative of all the better fed than taught!—Ho, ho, Tom! whither so gay and so airy this morning?

Enter Tom, *singing.*

Tom. Sir, we servants of single gentlemen are another kind of people than [illegible] drudges that do business; [illegible] the pleasures of board[illegible] [illegible] clear gain, [illegible] [illegible] of.

Humph. They [illegible] man of ten thousand [illegible] t'other day that [illegible] into Mr Sealand[illegible] little before I [illegible] too gentle for [illegible] into [illegible] hat to [illegible] great, [illegible] oaken cudgel, when you were a booby, became you much better than that dangling stick at your button, now you are a fop, that's fit for nothing, except it hangs there to be ready for your master's hand, when you are impertinent.

Tom. Uncle Humphrey, you know my master scorns to strike his servants; you talk as if the world was now just as it was when my old master and you were in your youth—when you went to dinner because it was so much o'clock, when the great blow was given in the hall at the pantry door, and all the family came out of their holes in such strange dresses and formal faces as you see in the pictures in our long gallery in the country.

Humph. Why, you wild rogue!

Tom. You could not fall to your dinner, till a formal fellow in a black gown said something over the meat, as if the cook had not made it ready enough.

Humph. Sirrah, who do you prate after?—despising men of sacred characters! I hope you never heard my young master talk so like a profligate.

Tom. Sir, I say you put upon me when I first came to town about being orderly, and the doctrine of wearing shams, to make linen last clean a fortnight, keeping my clothes fresh, and wearing a frock within doors.

Humph. Sirrah, I gave you those lessons, because I supposed at that time your master and you might have dined at home every day, and cost you nothing; then you might have made you a good family servant; but the gang you have frequented since, at chocolate houses and taverns, in a continual round of noise and extravagance——

Tom. I don't know what you heavy inmates call noise and extravagance; but we gentlemen, who are well fed, and cut a figure, sir, think it a fine life, and that we must be very pretty fellows, who are kept only to be looked at.

Humph. Very well, sir—I hope the fashion of being lewd and extravagant, despising of decency and order, is almost at an end, since it is arrived at persons of your quality.

Tom. Master Humphrey, ha! ha! you were an unhappy lad, to be sent up to town in such queer days as you were. Why now, sir, the lacqueys are the men of pleasure of the age, the top gamesters; and many a laced coat about town, have had their education in our party coloured regiment.—We are false lovers, have a taste of music, poetry, billet doux, dress, politics; ruin damsels; and when we are weary of this lewd town, and have a mind to take up, whip into our master's clothes, and marry fortunes.

Humph. Sirrah, there is no enduring your extravagance; I'll hear you prate no longer: I wanted to see you, to inquire how things go with your master, as far as you understand them. I suppose he knows he is to be married to-day?

Tom. Ay, sir, he knows it, and is dressed as gay as the sun; but, between you and I, my dear, he has a very heavy heart under all that gaiety. As soon as he was dressed, I retired, but overheard him sigh in the most heavy manner. He walked thoughtfully to and fro in the room, then went into his closet: when he came out, he gave me this for his mistress, whose maid, you know——

Humph. Is passionately fond of your fine person.

Tom. The poor fool is so tender, and loves to hear me talk of the world, and the plays, operas, and masquerades; and lard! says she, you are so wild—but you have a world of humour.

Humph. Coxcomb! Well, but why don't you run with your master's letter to Mrs Lucinda, as he ordered you?

Tom. Because Mrs Lucinda is not so easily come at as you think for.

Humph. Not easily come at? why, sir, are not her father and my old master agreed that she and Mr Bevil are to be one flesh before to-morrow morning?

Tom. It's no matter for that; her mother, it seems, Mrs Sealand, has not agreed to it; and you must know, Mr Humphrey, that in that family the grey mare is the better horse.

Humph. What dost thou mean?

Tom. In one word, Mrs Sealand pretends to have a will of her own, and has provided a relation of hers, a stiff starched philosopher, and a wise fool, for her daughter; for which reason, for these ten days past, she has suffered no message nor letter from my master to come near her.

Humph. And where had you this intelligence?

Tom. From a foolish fond soul that can keep nothing from me——one that will deliver this letter too, if she is rightly managed.

Humph. What, her pretty handmaid, Mrs Phillis?

Tom. Even she, sir. This is the very hour, you know, she usually comes hither, under a pretence of a visit to our housekeeper, forsooth, but in reality to have a glance at——

Humph. At your sweet face, I warrant you.

Tom. Nothing else in nature. You must know I love to fret and play with the little wanton——

Humph. Play with the little wanton! what will this world come to!

Tom. I met her this morning in a new gown, not a bit the worse for her lady's wearing, and she has always new thoughts and new airs with new clothes—then she never fails to steal some glance or gesture from every visitant at their house, and is indeed the whole town of coquettes at second hand.——But here she comes; in one motion she speaks and describes herself better than all the words in the world can.

Humph. Then I hope, dear sir, when your own affair is over, you will be so good as to mind your master's with her.

Tom. Dear Humphrey! you know my master is my friend, and those are people I never forget—

Humph. Sauciness itself! but I'll leave you to do your best for him. [*Exit.*

Enter PHILLIS.

Phil. O Mr Thomas, is Mrs Sugarkey at home? —Lard! one is almost ashamed to pass along the streets. The town is quite empty, and nobody of fashion left in it; and the ordinary people do so stare to see any thing dressed like a woman of condition pass by. Alas! alas! it is a sad thing to walk. O fortune, fortune!

Tom. What! a sad thing to walk! why, Madam Phillis, do you wish yourself lame?

Phil. No, Mr Thomas, but I wish I were generally carried in a coach or chair, and of a fortune neither to stand nor go, but to totter, or slide, to be short-sighted, or stare, to fleer in the face, to look distant, to observe, to overlook, yet all become me; and if I were rich, I could twire and loll as well as the best of them. O Tom, Tom! is it not a pity that you should be so great a coxcomb, and I so great a coquette, and yet be such poor devils as we are?

Tom. Mrs Phillis, I am your humble servant for that—

Phil. Yes, Mr Thomas, I know how much you are my humble servant, and know what you said to Mrs Judy, upon seeing her in one of her lady's cast mantuas, that any one would have thought her the lady; and that she had ordered the other to wear it till it sat easy—for now only it was becoming—This you said after somebody or other. O Tom, Tom! thou art as false and as base as the best gentleman of them all: but, you wretch! talk to me no more on the odious subject; don't, I say.

Tom. I know not how to resist your commands, madam. [*In a submissive tone, retiring.*

Phil. Commands about parting are grown mighty easy to you of late.

Tom. O, I have her! I have nettled and put her into the right temper to be wrought upon and set a prating. [*Aside.*]—Why, truly, to be plain with you, Mrs Phillis, I can take little comfort of late in frequenting your house.

Phil. Pray, Mr Thomas, what is it, all of a sudden, offends your nicety at our house?

Tom. I don't care to speak particulars, but I dislike the whole.

Phil. I thank you, sir; I am a part of that whole.

Tom. Mistake me not, good Phillis.

Phil. Good Phillis! saucy enough. But however—

Tom. I say it is, that thou art a part which gives me pain for the disposition of the whole. You must know, madam, to be serious, I am a man at the bottom of prodigious nice honour. You are too much exposed to company at your house. To be plain, I don't like so many, that would be your mistress's lovers, whispering to you.

Phil. Don't think to put that upon me. You say this, because I wrung you to the heart when I touched your guilty conscience about Judy.

Tom. Don't disparage your charms, good Phillis, with jealousy of so worthless an object; besides, she is a poor hussy; and if you doubt the sincerity of my love, you will allow me true to my interest. You are a fortune, Phillis—

Phil. What would the fop be at now? In good time, indeed, you shall be setting up for a fortune.

Tom. Dear Mrs Phillis! you have such a spirit that we shall never be dull in marriage, when we come together. But I tell you, you are a fortune, and you have an estate in my hands.

[*He pulls out a Purse—she eyes it.*

Phil. What pretence have I to what is in your hands, Mr Thomas?

Tom. As thus: there are hours, you know, when a lady is neither pleased nor displeased, neither sick nor well, when she lolls or loiters, when she is without desires, from having more of every thing than she knows what to do with.

Phil. Well, what then?

Tom. When she has not life enough to keep her bright eyes quite open to look at her own dear image in the glass.

Phil. Explain thyself, and don't be so fond of thy own prating.

Tom. There are also prosperous and good natured moments, as when a knot or a patch is happily fixed, when the complexion particularly flourishes.

Phil. Well, what then? I have not patience!

Tom. Why then—or on the like occasions—we servants, who have skill to know how to time business, see, when such a pretty folded thing as this is—[*Shows a Letter.*] may be presented, laid, or dropped, as best suits the present humour. And, madam, because it is a long wearisome journey to run through all the several stages of a lady's temper, my master, who is the most reasonable man in the world, presents you this, to bear your charges on the road.

[*Gives her the Purse.*

Phil. Now, you think me a corrupt hussy.

Tom. O fie! I only think you'll take the letter.

Phil. Nay, I know you do; but I know my own innocence: I take it for my mistress's sake.

Tom. I know it, my pretty one! I know it.

Phil. Yes, I say I do it, because I would not have my mistress deluded by one, who gives no proof of his passion: but I'll talk more of this as you see me on my way home.——No, Tom; I assure thee I take this trash of thy master's, not for the value of the thing, but as it convinces me he has a true respect for my mistress. I remember a verse to the purpose:—

They may be false, who languish and complain,
But they who part with money never feign.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

BEVIL *junior's Lodgings.*

BEVIL *junior discovered reading.*

Bev. jun. These moral writers practise virtue after death. This charming vision of Mirza! such an author consulted in a morning sets the spirits for the vicissitudes of the day better than the glass does a man's person. But what a day have I to go through! to put on an easy look with an aching heart!——If this lady, my father urges me to marry, should not refuse me, my dilemma is insupportable. But why should I fear it? Is she not in equal distress with me? Has not the letter I have sent her this morning confessed my inclinations to another? Nay, have I not moral assurances of her engagements too to my friend Myrtle? It's impossible, but she must give in to it; for sure to be denied is a favour any man may pretend to. It must be so.——Well, then, with the assurance of being rejected, I think I may confidently say to my father, I am ready to marry her—then, let me resolve upon (what I am not very good at) an honest dissimulation.

Enter TOM.

Tom. Sir John Bevil, sir, is in the next room.

Bev. jun. Dunce! why did you not bring him in?

Tom. I told him, sir, you were in your closet.

Bev. jun. I thought you had known, sir, it was my duty to see my father any where.

[*Going himself to the Door.*

Tom. The devil's in my master! he has always more wit than I have. [*Aside.*

BEVIL *junior introducing* SIR JOHN.

Bev. jun. Sir, you are the most gallant, the most complaisant, of all parents.—Sure 'tis not a compliment to say these lodgings are yours.—Why wou'd you not walk in, sir?

Sir J. Bev. I was loath to interrupt you unseasonably on your wedding-day.

Bev. jun. One to whom I am beholden for my birth-day, might have used less ceremony.

Sir J. Bev. Well, son, I have intelligence you have writ to your mistress this morning. It would please my curiosity to know the contents of a wedding-day letter, for courtship must then be over.

Bev. jun. I assure you, sir, there was no insolence in it upon the prospect of such a vast fortune's being added to our family, but much acknowledgment of the lady's great desert.

Sir J. Bev. But, dear Jack, are you in earnest in all this? and will you really marry her?

Bev. jun. Did I ever disobey any command of yours, sir? nay, any inclination that I saw you bent upon? If the lady is dressed and ready, you see I am; I suppose the lawyers are ready too.

Enter HUMPHREY.

Humph. Sir, Mr Sealand is at the coffee-house, and has sent to speak with you.

Sir J. Bev. O, that's well! then I warrant the lawyers are ready. Son, you'll be in the way, you say——

Bev. jun. If you please, sir, I'll take a chair, and go to Mr Sealand's, where the young lady and I will wait your leisure.

Sir J. Bev. By no means—the old fellow will be so vain, if he sees——

Bev. jun. Ay,—but the young lady, sir, will think me so indifferent——

Humph. Ay—there you are right—press your readiness to go to the bride—we won't let you.

[*Aside to* BEVIL, *jun.*

Bev. jun. Are you sure of that?

[*Aside to* HUMPHREY.

Humph. How he likes being prevented! [*Aside.*

Sir J. Bev. No, no; you are an hour or two too early. [*Looking on his Watch.*

Bev. jun. To visit a beautiful, virtuous young woman, in the pride and bloom of life, ready to give herself to my arms, and to place her happiness or misery for the future in being agreeable or displeasing to me, is a——Call a chair.

Sir J. Bev. Pray let me govern in this matter. You can't tell how humoursome old fellows are.—There's no offering reason to some of them, especially when they are rich.—I'll go myself, and take orders in your affair—You'll be in the way, I suppose, if I send to you—I'll leave your old friend with you——Humphrey—don't let him stir, d'ye hear. Your servant, your servant. [*Exit* SIR JOHN.

Humph. I have a sad time on't, sir, between you and my master—I see you are unwilling, and I know his violent inclinations for the match; I must betray neither, and yet deceive you both, for your common good.——Heav'n grant a good end of this matter: but there is a lady, sir, that gives your father much trouble and sorrow—You'll pardon me.

Bev. jun. Humphrey, I know thou art a friend to both, and in that confidence I dare tell thee—That lady—is a woman of honour and virtue.—You may assure yourself I never will marry without my father's consent; but give me leave to say too, this de-

claration does not come up to a promise that I will take whomsoever he pleases.

Humph. My dear master! were I but worthy to know this secret that so near concerns you, my life, my all, should be engaged to serve you. This, sir, I dare promise, that I'm sure I will and can be secret: your trust, at worst, but leaves you where you were; and if I cannot serve you, I will at once be plain, and tell you so.

Bev. jun. That's all I ask. Thou hast made it now my interest to trust thee.——Be patient, then, and hear the story of my heart.

Humph. I am all attention, sir.

Bev. jun. You may remember, Humphrey, that in my last travel, my father grew uneasy at my making so long a stay at Toulon.

Humph. I remember it; he was apprehensive some woman had laid hold of you.

Bev. jun. His fears were just, for there I first saw this lady: she is of English birth: her father's name was Danvers, a younger brother of an ancient family, and originally an eminent merchant of Bristol, who, upon repeated misfortunes, was reduced to go privately to the Indies. In this retreat, Providence again grew favourable to his industry, and in six years time restored him to his former fortunes. On this he sent directions over, that his wife and little family should follow him to the Indies. His wife, impatient to obey such welcome orders, would not wait the leisure of a convoy, but took the first occasion of a single ship, and with her husband's sister only, and this daughter, then scarce seven years old, undertook the fatal voyage: for here, poor creature, she lost her liberty and life: she and her family, with all they had, were unfortunately taken by a privateer from Toulon. Being thus made a prisoner, though, as such, not ill treated, yet the fright, the shock, and the cruel dis-

appointment, seized with such violence upon her unhealthy frame, she sickened, pined, and died at sea.

Humph. Poor soul! Oh, the helpless infant!

Bev. jun. Her sister yet survived, and had the care of her: the captain, too, proved to have humanity, and became a father to her; for having himself married an English woman, and being childless, he brought home into Toulon this, her little countrywoman, this orphan, I may call her, presenting her, with all her dead mother's moveables of value, to his wife, to be educated as his own adopted daughter.

Humph. Fortune here seemed again to smile on her.

Bev. jun. Only to make her frowns more terrible; for, in his height of fortune, this captain too, her benefactor, unfortunately was killed at sea, and dying intestate, his estate fell wholly to an advocate, his brother, who coming soon to take possession, there found, among his other riches, this blooming virgin at his mercy.

Humph. He durst not sure abuse his power!

Bev. jun. No wonder, if his pampered blood was fired at the sight of her.——In short, he loved; but when all arts and gentle means had failed to move, he offered too his menaces in vain, denouncing vengeance on her cruelty, demanding her to account for all her maintenance from her childhood, seized on her little fortune as his own inheritance, and was dragging her by violence to prison, when Providence at the instant interposed, and sent me by miracle to relieve her.

Humph. 'Twas Providence, indeed! But, pray, sir, after all this trouble, how came this lady at last to England?

Bev. jun. The disappointed advocate, finding she had so unexpected a support, on cooler thoughts descended to a composition, which I, without her knowledge, secretly discharged.

Humph. That generous concealment made the obligation double.

Bev. jun. Having thus obtained her liberty, I prevailed, not without some difficulty, to see her safe to England, where we no sooner arrived, but my father, jealous of my being imprudently engaged, immediately proposed this other fatal match, that hangs upon my quiet.

Humph. I find, sir, you are irrecoverably fixed upon this lady.

Bev. jun. As my vital life dwells in my heart—and yet you see what I do to please my father;—walk in this pageantry of dress, this splendid covering of sorrow.

Humph. Now, sir, I have but one material question—

Bev. jun. Ask it freely.

Humph. Is it, then, your own passion for this secret lady, or hers for you, that gives you this aversion to the match your father has proposed you?

Bev. jun. I shall appear, Humphrey, more romantic in my answer than in all the rest of my story; for though I dote on her to death, and have no little reason to believe she has the same thoughts for me, yet, in all my acquaintance and utmost privacies with her, I never once directly told her that I loved.

Humph. How was it possible to avoid it?

Bev. jun. My tender obligations to my father have laid so inviolable a restraint upon my conduct, that, till I have his consent to speak, I am determined on that subject to be dumb for ever.

Humph. Well, sir, to your praise be it spoken, you are certainly the most unfashionable lover in Great Britain.

Enter TOM.

Tom. Sir, Mr Myrtle's at the next door, and, if you are at leisure, will be glad to wait on you.

Bev. jun. Whene'er he pleases——Hold, Tom; did you receive no answer to my letter?

Tom. Sir, I was desired to call again; for I was told, her mother would not let her be out of her sight; but about an hour hence, Mrs Phillis said, I should have one.

Bev. jun. Very well. [*Exit* TOM.

Humph. Sir, I will take another opportunity; in the mean time I only think it proper to tell you, that from a secret I know, you may appear to your father as forward as you please to marry Lucinda, without the least hazard of its coming to a conclusion.—— Sir, your most obedient humble servant.

Bev. jun. Honest Humphrey! continue but my friend in this exigence, and you shall always find me yours. [*Exit* HUMPHREY.] I long to hear how my letter has succeeded with Lucinda. But I think it cannot fail. Poor Myrtle what terrors must he be in all this while!——Since he knows she is offered to me, and refused [illegible] there is no conversing, or taking any measu[illegible]n for his own service. But I ought to bea[illegible] my friend, and use him as one in adversity.

All his disquietudes by my own I prove,
For none exceeds perplexity in love. [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

BEVIL *junior's Lodgings.*

Enter BEVIL, *jun. and* TOM.

Tom. Sir, Mr Myrtle.

Bev. jun. Very well.——Do you step again, and wait for an answer to my letter. [*Exit* TOM.

Enter MYRTLE.

Well, Charles, why so much care in thy countenance? Is there any thing in this world deserves it? you, who used to be so gay, so open, so vacant!

Myrt. I think we have [illegible] changed complexions. You, who used to be [illegible] the graver man, are now all air in your be[illegible]—But the cause of my concern may, for aught [illegible] know, be the same object that gives you all this satisfaction. In a word, I am told, that you are this very day (and your dress confirms me in it) to be married to Lucinda.

Bev. jun. You are not misinformed.——Nay, put not on the terrors of a rival till you hear me out. I shall disoblige the best of fathers, if I don't seem ready to marry Lucinda; and you know I have ever told you, you might make use of my secret resolution never to marry her, for your own service, as you please; but I am now driven to the extremity of immediately refusing or complying, unless you help me to escape the match.

Myrt. Escape, sir! neither her merit nor her fortune are below your acceptance. Escaping do you call it?

Bev. jun. Dear sir, do you wish I should desire the match?

Myrt. No——but such is my humorous and sickly state of mind, since it has been able to relish nothing but Lucinda, that though I must owe my happiness to your aversion to this marriage, I can't bear to hear her spoken of with levity or unconcern.

Bev. jun. Pardon me, sir, I shall transgress that way no more. She has understanding, beauty, shape, complexion, wit——

Myrt. Nay, dear Bevil! don't speak of her as if you loved her neither.

Bev. jun. Why then, to give you ease at once, though I allow Lucinda to have good sense, wit, beauty, and virtue, I know another in whom these qualities appear to me more amiable than in her.

Myrt. There you spoke like a reasonable and good-natured friend. When you acknowledge her merit, and own your prepossession for another, at once you gratify my fondness, and cure my jealousy.

Bev. jun. But all this while you take no notice, you have no apprehension, of another man that has twice the fortune of either of us.

Myrt. Cimberton! hang him, a formal, philosophical, pedantic coxcomb!——for the sot, with all these crude notions of divers things, under the direction of great vanity and very little judgment, shows his strongest bias is avarice, which is so predominant in him, that he will examine the limbs of his mistress with the caution of a jockey, and pays no more compliment to her personal charms than if she were a mere breeding animal.

Bev. jun. Are you sure, that is not affected? I have known some women sobner set on fire by that sort of

negligence, than by all the blaze and ceremony of a court.

Myrt. No, no, hang him! the rogue has no art; it is pure simple insolence and stupidity.

Bev. jun. Yet with all this I don't take him for a fool.

Myrt. I own the man is not a natural; he has a very quick sense, though a very slow understanding—he says, indeed, many things, that want only the circumstances of time and place to be very just and agreeable.

Bev. jun. Well, you may be sure of me, if you can disappoint him; but my intelligence says, the mother has actually sent for the conveyancer to draw articles for his marriage with Lucinda, though those for mine with her are, by her father's order, ready for signing. But it seems she has not thought fit to consult either him or his daughter in the matter.

Myrt. Pshaw! a poor troublesome woman!—Neither Lucinda nor her father will ever be brought to comply with it—besides, I am sure Cimberton can make no settlement upon her without the concurrence of his great uncle, Sir Geoffry, in the West.

Bev. jun. Well, sir, and I can tell you, that's the very point that is now laid before her council, to know whether a firm settlement can be made without this uncle's actually joining in it. Now, pray, consider, sir, when my affair with Lucinda comes, as it soon must, to an open rupture, how are you sure that Cimberton's fortune may not then tempt her father too to hear his proposals?

Myrt. There you are right, indeed; that must be provided against.—Do you know who are her counsel?

Bev. jun. Yes, for your service I have found out that too; they are Serjeant Bramble and old Target—By the way, they are neither of them known in the family; now I was thinking why might you not put

a couple of false counsels upon her, to delay and confound matters a little—besides, it may probably let you into the bottom of her whole design against you.

Myrt. As how, pray?

Bev. jun. Why, can't you slip on a black wig and a gown, and be old Bramble yourself?

Myrt. Ha! I don't dislike it—but what shall I do for a brother in the case?

Bev. jun. What think you of my fellow, Tom? The rogue's intelligent, and is a good mimic; all his part will but be to stutter heartily, for that's old Target's case—the conduct of the scene will chiefly lie upon you.

Myrt. I like it of all things; if you'll send Tom to my chambers, I will give him full instructions. This will certainly give me occasion to raise difficulties, to puzzle or confound her project for a while at least.

Bev. jun. I warrant your success; so far we are right then. And now, Charles, your apprehensions of my marrying her are all you have to get over.

Myrt. Dear Bevil, though I know you are my friend, yet when I abstract myself from my own interest in the thing, I know [redacted] objection she can make to you or you to her, and therefore hope—

Bev. jun. Dear Myrtle, I am as much obliged to you for the cause of your suspicion, as I am offended at the effect; but, be assured, I am taking measures for your certain security, and that all things, with regard to me, will end in your entire satisfaction.

Myrt. Well, I'll promise you to be as easy and as confident as I can, though I cannot but remember, that I have more than life at stake on your fidelity.

[*Going.*

Bev. jun. Then, depend upon it, you have no chance against you.

Myrt. Nay, no ceremony; you know I must be going. [*Exit* MYRTLE.

Bev. jun. But all this while poor Indiana is tor-

tured with her doubts of me; she has no support or comfort but in my fidelity, yet sees me daily pressed to marriage with another. How painful, in such a crisis, must be every hour she thinks on me! I'll let her see, at least, my conduct to her is not changed. I'll take this opportunity to visit her: for, though the religious vow I have made to my father restrains me from ever marrying without his approbation, yet that confines me not from seeing a virtuous woman, that is the pure delight of my eyes, and the guiltless joy of my heart. But the best condition of human life is but a gentler misery.

To hope for perfect happiness is vain,
And love has ever its allays of pain. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

INDIANA'S *Lodgings.*

Enter I[illegible]LLA *and* INDIANA.

Isa. Yes——I say 'tis artifice, dear child! I say to thee, again and again, 'tis all skill and management.

Ind. Will you persuade me there can be an ill design in supporting me in the condition of a woman of quality! attended, dressed and lodged, like one, in my appearance abroad, and my furniture at home, every way in the most sumptuous manner, and he that does it has an artifice, a design in it?

Isa. Yes, yes.

Ind. And all this without so much as explaining to me, that all about me comes from him?

Isa. Ay, ay,—the more for that—that keeps the title to all you have the more in him.

Ind. The more in him!—he scorns the thought—

Isa. Then he—he—he—

Ind. Well, be not so eager.——If he is an ill man, let's look into his stratagems: here is another of them: [*Showing a Letter.*] here's two hundred and fifty pounds, in bank notes, with these words, "*To pay for the set of dressing-plate which will be brought home to-morrow.*" Why, dear aunt! now here's another piece of skill for you, which I own I cannot comprehend; and it is with a bleeding heart I hear you say any thing to the disadvantage of Mr Bevil. When he is present, I look upon him as one, to whom I owe my life and the support of it; then, again, as the man who loves me with sincerity and honour. When his eyes are cast another way, and I dare survey him, my heart is painfully divided between shame and love—I say, thus it is with me while I see him; and in his absence I am entertained with nothing but your endeavours to tear this amiable image from my heart, and in its stead to place a base dissembler, an artful invader of my happiness, my innocence, my honour.

Isa. Ah, poor soul! has not this plot taken? don't you die for him? has not the [illegible] he has taken been the most proper with you? [illegible]o! he has sense, and has judged the thing right.

Ind. Go on, then, since nothing can answer you; say what you will of him——Heigho!

Isa. Heigho! indeed. It is better to say so as you are now, than as many others are. There are, among the destroyers of women, the gentle, the generous, the mild, the affable, the humble, who all, soon after their success in their designs, turn to the contrary of those characters.

Ind. That's truly observed. [*Aside.*] But what's all this to Bevil?

Isa. This is to Bevil, and all mankind. Such is the world, and such (since the behaviour of one man to myself) have I believed all the rest of the sex.

[*Aside.*

Ind. I will not doubt the truth of Bevil, I will not doubt it: he has not spoken it by an organ that is given to lying: his eyes are all that ever told me that he was mine. I know his virtue, I know his filial piety, and ought to trust his management with a father to whom he has uncommon obligations. What have I to be concerned for? My lesson is very short. If he takes me for ever, my purpose of life is only to please him. If he leaves me, (which Heaven avert!) I know he'll do it nobly; and I shall have nothing to do but to learn to die, after worse than death has happened to me.

Isa. Ay, do persist in your credulity! flatter yourself, that a man of his figure and fortune will make himself the jest of the town, and marry a handsome beggar, for love.

Ind. The town! I must tell you, madam, the fools, that laugh at Mr Bevil, will but make themselves more ridiculous; his actions are the result of thinking, and he has sense enough to make even virtue fashionable.

Isa. Come, come, if he were the honest fool you take him for, why [illegible]he kept you here these three weeks, without sending you to Bristol, in search of your father, your family, and your relations?

Ind. I am convinced he still designs it; besides, has he not writ to Bristol? and has not he advice that my father has not been heard of there almost these twenty years?

Isa. All sham, mere evasion; he is afraid, if he should carry you thither, your honest relations may take you out of his hands, and so blow up all his wicked hopes at once.

Ind. Wicked hopes! did I ever give him any such?

Isa. Has he ever given you any honest ones? Can you say in your conscience he has ever once offered to marry you?

Ind. No; but by his behaviour I am convinced he

will offer it the moment 'tis in his power, or consistent with his honour, to make such a promise good to me.

Isa. His honour!

Ind. I will rely upon it; therefore desire you will not make my life uneasy by these ungrateful jealousies of one, to whom I am, and wish to be, obliged; for from his integrity alone I have resolved to hope for happiness.

Isa. Nay, I have done my duty; if you won't see, at your peril be it.—— [*Exit.*

Ind. Let it be.—This is his hour of visiting me. All the rest of my life is but waiting till he comes; I live only while I'm with him.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Madam, Mr Bevil.

Ind. Let him walk in.—Design! impossible! a base designing mind could never think of what he hourly puts in practice—and yet, since the late rumour of his marriage, he seems more reserved than formerly—he sends in, too, before he sees me, to know if I am at leisure.——Such new respect may cover coldness in the heart—it certainly makes me thoughtful——I'll know the worst at once; I'll lay such fair occasions in his way, that it shall be impossible to avoid an explanation——for these doubts are insupportable.——But see, he comes, and clears them all.

Enter BEVIL, *junior.*

Bev. jun. Madam, your most obedient.—I am afraid I broke in upon your rest last night—'twas very late before we parted, but 'twas your own fault; I never saw you in such agreeable humour.

Ind. I am extremely glad we are both pleased; for I thought I never saw you better company.

Bev. jun. Me, madam! you rally; I said very little.

Ind. But I am afraid you heard me say a great deal; and when a woman is in the talking vein, the most agreeable thing a man can do, you know, is to have patience to hear her.

Bev. jun. Then it's pity, madam, you should ever be silent, that we might be always agreeable to one another.

Ind. If I had your talent or power to make my actions speak for me, I might indeed be silent, and yet pretend to something more than the agreeable.

Bev. jun. If I might be vain of any thing in my power, madam, it is, that my understanding from all your sex has marked you out as the most deserving object of my esteem.

Ind. Should I think I deserve this, it were enough to make my vanity forfeit the esteem you offer me.

Bev. jun. How so, madam?

Ind. Because esteem is the result of reason, and to deserve it from good sense the height of human glory. —Nay, I had rather a man of honour should pay me that, than all the homage of a sincere and humble love.

Bev. jun. You certainly distinguish right, madam; love often kindles from external merit only—

Ind. But esteem arises from a higher source, the merit of the soul—

Bev. jun. True——and great souls only can deserve it. [*Bowing respectfully.*

Ind. Now I think they are greater still that can so charitably part with it.

Bev. jun. Now, madam, you make me vain, since the utmost pride and pleasure of my life is that I esteem you—as I ought.

Ind. [*Aside.*] As he ought! still more perplexing! he neither saves nor kills my hope.

Bev. jun. But, madam, we grow grave, methinks—let's find some other subject.——Pray how did you like the opera last night?

Ind. First give me leave to thank you for my tickets.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, here's Signior Carbonelli says he waits your commands in the next room.

Bev. jun. Apropos! you were saying yesterday, madam, you had a mind to hear him.—Will you give him leave to entertain you now?

Ind. By all means. Desire the gentleman to walk in. [*Exit* SERVANT.] Now, once more to try him. [*Aside.*] I was saying just now, I believe, you would never let me dispute with you, and I dare say it will always be so: however, I must have your opinion upon a subject which created a debate between my aunt and me just before you came hither; she would needs have it that no man ever does any extraordinary kindness or service for a woman but for his own sake.

Bev. jun. Well, madam! indeed I can't but be of her mind.

Ind. What, though he would maintain and support her, without demanding any thing of her on her part!

Bev. jun. Why, madam, is making an expense in the service of a valuable woman, (for such I must suppose her) though she should never do him any favour, nay, though she should never know who did her such service, such a mighty heroic business?

Ind. Certainly! I should think he must be a man of an uncommon mould.

Bev. jun. Dear madam, why so? 'tis but at best

a better taste in expense. What mighty matter is there in all this?

Ind. No mighty matter in so disinterested a friendship!

Bev. jun. Disinterested! I can't think him so. Why, madam, a greater expense than all this men lay out upon an unnecessary stable of horses.

Ind. Can you be sincere in what you say!

Bev. jun. You may depend upon it, if you know any such man, he does not love dogs inordinately.

Ind. No, that he does not.

Bev. jun. Nor cards, nor dice.

Ind. No.

Bev. jun. Nor bottle companions.

Ind. No.

Bev. jun. Nor loose women.

Ind. No, I'm sure he does not.

Bev. jun. Take my word, then, if your admired hero is not liable to any of these kind of demands, there's no such preeminence in this as you imagine.

Ind. But still, I insist, his having no private interest in the action makes it prodigious, almost incredible.

Bev. jun. Dear madam, I never knew you more mistaken. Why, who can be more an usurer than he, who lays out his money in such valuable purchases? If pleasure be worth purchasing, how great a pleasure is it to him, who has a true taste of life, to ease an aching heart; to see the human countenance lighted up into smiles of joy, on the receipt of a bit of ore, which is superfluous, and otherwise useless, in a man's own pocket! This is the effect of a humane disposition, where there is only a general tie of nature and common necessity; what then must it be, when we serve an object of merit, of admiration!

Ind. Well, the more you argue against it, the more I shall admire the generosity.

Bev. jun. Nay, then, madam, 'tis time to fly, after a declaration that my opinion strengthens my adversary's argument—I had best hasten to my appointment with Mr Myrtle, and be gone, while we are friends, and—before things are brought to an extremity. [*Exit carelessly.*

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Well, madam, what think you of him now, pray?

Ind. I protest I begin to fear he is wholly disinterested in what he does for me. On my heart, he has no other view but the mere pleasure of doing it, and has neither good or bad designs upon me.

Isa. Ah, dear niece, don't be in fear of both; I'll warrant you, you will know time enough that he is not indifferent.

Ind. You please me when you tell me so; for if he has any wishes towards me, I know he will not pursue them but with honour.

Isa. I wish I were as confident of one as t'other.—I saw the respectful downcast of his eye, when you catched him gazing at you during the music. O the undissembled guilty look! but till—till—till—

Ind. Till what?

Isa. Till I know whether Mr Myrtle and Mr Bevil are really friends or foes—and that I will be convinced of before I sleep, for you shall not be deceived. [*Exit* ISABELLA.

Ind. I'm sure I never shall, if your fears can guard me. In the mean time, I'll wrap myself up in the integrity of my own heart, nor dare to doubt of his.

As conscious honour all his actions steers.
So conscious innocence dispels my fears. [*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

SEALAND'S *House.*

Enter TOM, *meeting* PHILLIS.

Tom. Well, Phillis!——What! with a face as if you had never seen me before!——What work have I to do now! She has seen some new visitant at their house, whose airs she has catched, and is resolved to practise them upon me. Numberless are the changes she'll dance through, before she'll answer this plain question, *videlicet*, Have you delivered my master's letter to your lady? Nay, I know her too well to ask an account of it in an ordinary way; I'll be in my airs as well as she. [*Aside.*]——Well, madam, as unhappy as you are at present pleased to make me, I would not in the general be any other than what I am; I would not be a bit wiser, a bit richer, a bit taller, a bit shorter, than I am at this instant.

[*Looking steadfastly at her.*

Phil. Did ever any body doubt, Master Thomas, but that you were extremely satisfied with your sweet self?

Tom. I am, indeed.—The thing I have least reason to be satisfied with is my fortune, and I am glad of my poverty; perhaps, if I were rich, I should overlook the finest woman in the world, that wants nothing but riches to be thought so.

Phil. How prettily was that said! But I'll have a great deal more before I'll say one word. [*Aside.*

Tom. I should, perhaps, have been stupidly above her, had I not been her equal, and by not being her equal, never had opportunity of being her slave. I am my master's servant for hire, I am my mistress's from choice, wou'd she but approve my passion.

Phil. I think it is the first time I ever heard you speak of it with any sense of anguish, if you really do suffer any.

Tom. Ah, Phillis! can you doubt, after what you have seen?

Phil. I know not what I have seen, nor what I have heard; but since I am at leisure, you may tell me when you fell in love with me, how you fell in love with me, and what you have suffered, or are ready to suffer, for me.

Tom. O the unmerciful jade! when I'm in haste about my master's letter—But I must go through it. [*Aside.*]—Ah! too well I remember when, and how, and on what occasion, I was first surprised. It was on the first of April, one thousand seven hundred and fifteen, I came into Mr Sealand's service; I was then a hobble-de-hoy, and you a pretty little tight girl, a favourite handmaid of the housekeeper.—At that time we neither of us knew what was in us. I remember I was ordered to get out of the window, one pair of stairs, to rub the sashes clean—the person employed on the inner side was your charming self, whom I had never seen before.

Phil. I think I remember the silly accident. What made ye, you oaf, ready to fall down into the street?

Tom. You know not, I warrant you—you could not guess what surprised me—you took no delight when you immediately grew wanton in your conquest, and put your lips close, and breathed upon the glass, and when my lips approached, you rubbed a dirty cloth against my face, and hid your beauteous form; when

I again drew near, you spit and rubbed, and smiled at my undoing.

Phil. What silly thoughts you men have!

Tom. We were Pyramus and Thisbe—but ten times harder was my fate: Pyramus could peep only through a wall; I saw her, saw my Thisbe, in all her beauty, but as much kept from her as if a hundred walls between! for there was more, there was her will against me.—Would she but relent!——Oh, Phillis! Phillis! shorten my torment, and declare you pity me.

Phil. I believe it's very sufferable; the pain is not so exquisite but that you may bear it a little longer.

Tom. Oh, my charming Phillis! if all depended on my fair one's will, I could with glory suffer——but, dearest creature! consider our miserable state.

Phil. How! miserable!

Tom. We are miserable to be in love, and under the command of others than those we love—with that generous passion in the heart to be sent to and fro on errands, called, checked, and rated for the meanest trifles——Oh, Phillis! you don't know how many china cups and glasses my passion for you has made me break: you have broken my fortune as well as my heart.

Phil. Well, Mr Thomas, I cannot but own to you, that I believe your master writes, and you speak, the best of any men in the world. Never was a woman so well pleased with a letter as my young lady was with his, and this is an answer to it.

[*Gives him a Letter.*

Tom. This was well done, my dearest! Consider, we must strike out some pretty livelihood for ourselves, by closing their affairs: it will be nothing for them to give us a little being of our own, some small tenement, out of their large possessions: whatever they give us, it will be more than what they keep for themselves: one acre with Phillis would be worth a whole county without her.

Phil. Oh, could I but believe you!

Tom. If not the utterance, believe the touch of my lips. [*Kisses her.*

Phil. There's no contradicting you. How closely you argue, Tom!

Tom. And will closer in due time; but I must hasten with this letter to hasten towards the possession of you—then, Phillis, consider how I must be revenged (look to it!) of all your skittishness, shy looks, and at best but coy compliances.

Phil. Oh, Tom! you grow wanton and sensual, as my lady calls it: I must not endure it. Oh! foh! you are a man, an odious, filthy, male creature! you should behave, if you had a right sense, or were a man of sense, like Mr Cimberton, with distance and indifference; and not rush on one as if you were seizing a prey. But, hush—the ladies are coming.—Good Tom, don't kiss me above once, and be gone.—Lard! we have been fooling and toying, and not considered the main business of our masters and mistresses.

Tom. Why, their business is to be fooling and toying as soon as the parchments are ready.

Phil. Well remembered—Parchments—my lady, to my knowledge, is preparing writings between her coxcomb cousin, Cimberton, and my mistress, though my master has an eye to the parchments already prepared between your master, Mr Bevil, and my mistress; and I believe my mistress herself has signed and sealed in her heart to Mr Myrtle.—Did I not bid you kiss me but once, and be gone? but I know you won't be satisfy'd.

Tom. No, you smooth creature! how should I? [*Kisses her hand.*

Phil. Well, since you are so humble, or so cool, as to ravish my hand only, I'll take my leave of you, like a great lady, and you a man of quality. [*They salute formall*

Tom. Pox of all this state!

[*Offers to kiss her more closely.*

Phil. Oh, here is my young mistress! [TOM *taps her Neck behind, and kisses his Fingers.*] Go, ye liquorish fool. [*Exit* TOM.

Enter LUCINDA.

Luc. Who was that you were hurrying away?

Phil. One that I had no mind to part with.

Luc. Why did you turn him away then?

Phil. For your ladyship's service, to carry your ladyship's letter to his master. I could hardly get the rogue away.

Luc. Why, has he so little love for his master?

Phil. No, but he has so much love for his mistress.

Luc. But I thought I heard him kiss you: why do you suffer that?

Phil. Why, madam, we vulgar take it to be a sign of love. We servants, we poor people, that have nothing but our persons to bestow or treat for, are forced to deal and bargain by way of sample; and therefore, as we have no parchments or wax necessary in our agreements, we squeeze with our hands, and seal with our lips, to ratify vows and promises.

Luc. But can't you trust one another, without such earnest down?

Phil. We don't think it safe, any more than you gentry, to come together without deeds executed.

Luc. Thou art a pert, merry hussy.

Phil. I wish, madam, your lover and you were as happy as Tom and your servant are.

Luc. You grow impertinent.

Phil. I have done, madam; and I won't ask you what you intend to do with Mr Myrtle, what your father will do with Mr Bevil, nor what you all, especially my lady, mean by admitting Mr Cimberton as particularly here as if he were married to you al-

ready; nay, you are married actually, as far as people of quality are.

Luc. How's that?

Phil. You have different beds in the same house.

Luc. Pshaw! I have a very great value for Mr Bevil, but have absolutely put an end to his pretensions in the letter I gave you for him.

Phil. Then, Mr Myrtle——

Luc. He had my parents' leave to apply to me, and by that he has won me and my affections: who is to have this body of mine, without them, it seems is nothing to me: my mother says, 'tis indecent for me to let my thoughts stray about the person of my husband; nay, she says a maid rightly virtuous, though she may have been where her lover was a thousand times, should not have made observations enough to know him from another man, when she sees him in a third place.

Phil. That's more than the severity of a nun; for not to see when one may is hardly possible, not to see when one can't is very easy: at this rate, madam, there are a great many whom you have not seen, who——

Luc. Mamma says, the first time you see your husband should be at that instant he is made so. When your father, with the help of the minister, gives you to him, then you are to see him, then you are to observe and take notice of him, because then you are to obey him.

Phil. But does not my lady remember, you are to love as well as to obey?

Luc. To love is a passion, 'tis a desire, and we must have no desires. Oh! I cannot endure the reflection. With what insensibility on my part, with what more than patience, have I been exposed and offered to some awkward booby or other in every county of Great Britain!

Phil. Indeed, madam, I wonder I never heard you speak of it before with this indignation.

Luc. Every corner of the land has presented me with a wealthy coxcomb: as fast as one treaty has gone off, another has come on, till my name and person has been the tittle-tattle of the whole town.

Phil. But, madam, all these vexations will end very soon in one for all: Mr Cimberton is your mother's kinsman, and three hundred years an older gentleman than any lover you ever had; for which reason, with that of his prodigious large estate, she is resolved on him, and has sent to consult the lawyers accordingly; nay has, whether you know it or no, been in treaty with Sir Geoffry, who, to join in the settlement, has accepted of a sum to do it, and is every moment expected in town for that purpose.

Luc. How do you get all this intelligence?

Phil. By an art I have, I thank my stars, beyond all the waiting-maids in Great Britain; the art of listening, madam, for your ladyship's service.

Luc. I shall soon know as much as you do. Leave me, leave me, Phillis; begone. Here, here, I'll turn you out. My mother says I must not converse with my servants, though I must converse with no one else. [*Exit* PHIL.] Here he comes, with my mother—it's much if he looks at me, or if he does, takes no more notice of me than of any other moveable in the room.

Enter MRS SEALAND *and* MR CIMBERTON.

Mrs Seal. How do I admire this noble, this learned taste of yours, and the worthy regard you have to your own ancient and honourable house, in consulting a means to keep the blood as pure and as regularly descended as may be!

Cimb. Why really, madam, the young women of this age are treated with discourses of such a tendency, and their imaginations so bewildered in flesh and blood, that a man of reason can't talk to be understood: they have no ideas of happiness but

what are more gross than the gratification of hunger and thirst.

Luc. With how much reflection he is a coxcomb! [*Aside.*

Cimb. And in truth, madam, I have considered it as a most brutal custom, that persons of the first character in the world should go as ordinarily, and with as little shame, to bed as to dinner with one another.

Luc. She, that willingly goes to bed to thee, must have no shame, I'm sure. [*Aside.*

Mrs Seal. Oh, cousin Cimberton! cousin Cimberton! how abstracted, how refined is your sense of things! but indeed it is too true, there is nothing so ordinary as to say, in the best governed families, my master and lady are gone to bed—one does not know but it might have been said of one's self.

[*Hiding her Face with her Fan.*

Cim. Lycurgus, madam, instituted otherwise: among the Lacedemonians, the whole female world was pregnant, but none but the mothers themselves knew by whom; their meetings were secret, and the virtuous congress always by stealth; and no such professed doings between the sexes as are tolerated among us under the audacious word marriage.

Mrs Seal. Oh! had I lived in those days, and been a matron of Sparta, one might with less indecency have had ten children, according to that modest institution, than one under the confusion of our modern barefaced manner.

Luc. And yet, poor woman! she has gone through the whole ceremony, and here I stand a melancholy proof of it. [*Aside.*

Mrs Seal. We will talk, then, of business. That girl, walking about the room there, is to be your wife: she has, I confess, no ideas, no sentiments, that speak her born of a thinking mother.

Cim. I have observed her: her lively look, free air, and disengaged countenance, speak her very——

Luc. Very what?

Cimb. If you please, madam—to set her a little that way.

Mrs Seal. Lucinda, say nothing to him, you are not a match for him: when you are married, you may speak to such a husband, when you're spoken to: but I am disposing of you above yourself every way.

Cimb. Madam, you cannot but observe the inconveniences I expose myself to, in hopes that your ladyship will be the consort of my better part. As for the young woman, she is rather an impediment than a help to a man of letters and speculation. Madam, there is no reflection, no philosophy, can at all times subdue the sensitive life, but the animal shall sometimes carry away the man——Ha! ay, the vermilion of her lips!

Luc. Pray don't talk of me thus.

Cimb. The pretty enough—pant of her bosom!

Luc. Sir! madam, don't you hear him

Cimb. Her forward chest!

Luc. Intolerable!

Cimb. High health!

Luc. The grave, easy, impudence of him!

Cimb. Proud heart!

Luc. Stupid coxcomb!

Cimb. I say, madam, her impatience, while we are looking at her, throws out all attractions—her arms—her neck—what a spring in her step!

Luc. Don't you run me over thus, you strange unaccountable——

Cimb. What an elasticity in her veins and arteries!

Luc. I have no veins, no arteries!

Mrs Seal. Oh, child! hear him; he talks finely; he's a scholar; he knows what you have.

Cimb. The speaking invitation of her shape, the gathering of herself up, and the indignation you see in the pretty little thing!—

Luc. Monster! there's no bearing it. The hideous

sot!—There's no enduring it to be thus surveyed like a steed at sale!

Cimb. At sale!—she's very illiterate; but she's very well limbed too. Turn her in, I see what she is.

Mrs Seal. Go, you creature! I am ashamed of you. [*Exit* LUCINDA, *in a rage.*

Cimb. No harm done.—You know, madam, the better sort of people, as I observed to you, treat by their lawyers of weddings; [*Adjusting himself at the Glass.*] and the woman in the bargain, like the mansion-house in the sale of the estate, is thrown in, and what that is, whether good or bad, is not at all considered.

Mrs Seal. I grant it, and therefore make no demand for her youth and beauty, and every other accomplishment, as the common world think them; because she is not polite. I have given directions for the marriage settlements, and Sir Geoffry Cimberton's counsel is to meet ours here at this hour, concerning his joining in the deed, which, when executed, makes you capable of settling what is due to Lucinda's fortune. Herself, as I told you, I say nothing of.

Cimb. No, no, no; indeed, madam, it is not usual, and I must depend upon my own reflection and philosophy not to overstock my family.

Mrs Seal. I cannot help her, cousin Cimberton, but she is, for aught I see, as well as the daughter of any body else.

Cimb. That is very true, madam.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. The lawyers are come.

Mrs Seal. But, good cousin, you must have patience with them. These lawyers, I am told, are of different kind; one is what they call a chamber-counsel, the other a pleader: the conveyancer is slow, from an imperfection in his speech, and therefore shunned the bar, but extremely passionate, and im-

patient of contradiction: the other is as warm as he, but has a tongue so voluble, and a head so conceited, he will suffer nobody to speak but himself.

Cimb. You mean old Sergeant Target and Counsellor Bramble: I have heard of them.

[*Exit* SERVANT.

Enter SERVANT, *introducing* MYRTLE *and* TOM, *disguised as* BRAMBLE *and* TARGET.

Mrs Seal. Gentlemen, this is the party concerned, Mr Cimberton; and I hope you have considered of the matter.

Targ. Yes, madam, we have agreed, that it must be by indent—dent—dent—dent—

Bramb. Yes, madam, Mr Sergeant and myself have agreed, as he is pleased to inform you, that it must be an indenture tripartite, and tripartite let it be, for Sir Geoffry must needs be a party. Old Cimberton, in the year 1619, says, in that ancient roll in Mr Sergeant's hands, as recourse thereto being had will more at large appear——

Targ. Yes, and by the deeds in your hands, it appears that——

Bramb. Mr Sergeant, I beg of you to make no inferences upon what is in our custody, but speak to the titles in your own deeds.—I shall not show that deed till my client is in town.

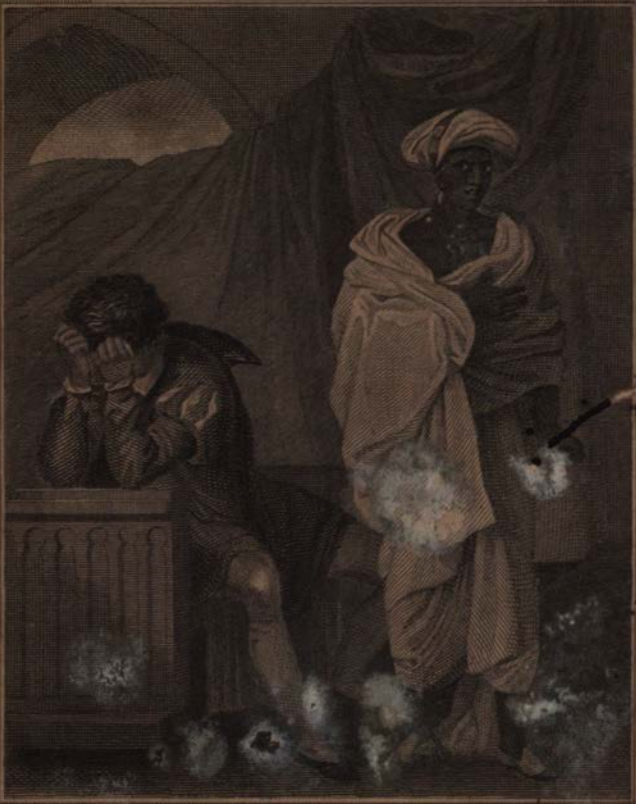
Cimb. You know best your own methods.

Mrs Seal. The single question is, whether the entail is such, that my cousin, Sir Geoffry, is necessary in this affair?

Bramb. Yes, as to the lordship of Tretriplet, but not as to the messuage of Grimgribber.

Targ. I say that Gr—gr—, that Gr—gr—, Grimgribber, Grimgribber is in us; that is to say, the remainder thereof, as well as that of Tr—, Tr—, Triplet.

REVENGE,



ZANGA. GROAN ON, AND WITH THE SOUND
ACT. IV. REFRESH MY SOUL. SCENE. I.

Painted by H. Smirke. Published by Longman & Co. March. 1816. Engraved by C. Heath.

THE

REVENGE;

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

By EDWARD YOUNG, LL. D.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRES-ROYAL,

COVENT GARDEN AND DRURY-LANE.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS INCHBALD.

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PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,

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Bramb. You go upon the deed of Sir Ralph, made the middle of the last century, precedent to that in which old Cimberton made over the remainder, and made it pass to the heirs general, by which your client comes in; and I question whether the remainder even of Tretriplet is in him——but we are willing to waive that, and give him a valuable consideration. But we shall not purchase what is in us for ever, as Grimgribber is, at the rate as we guard against the contingent of Mr Cimberton having no son.——Then we know Sir Geoffry is the first of the collateral male line in this family——yet——

Targ. Sir, Gr——gr——ber is——

Bramb. I apprehend you very well, and your argument might be of force, and we would be inclined to hear that in all its parts—but, sir, I see very plainly what you are going into—I tell you it is as probable a contingent that Sir Geoffry may die before Mr Cimberton, as that he may outlive him.

Targ. Sir, we are not ripe for that yet, but I must say—

Bramb. Si[illegible] you the whole extent of that argument, but that will go no farther than as to the claimants under old Cimberton.—I am of opinion that, according to the instructions of Sir Ralph, he could [illegible] dock the [illegible] and then create a new estate to the heirs in [illegible]

Targ. Sir, I have [illegible] to be told that, when Gr—g[illegible]—ber——

Bramb. I will allow it you, Mr Sergeant; but there must be the words heirs for ever, to make such an estate as you pretend.

Cimb. I must be impartial though you are counsel for my side of the question.——Were it not that you are so good as to allow him what he has not said, I should think it very hard you should answer him without hearing him.——But, gentlemen, I believe you have both considered this matter, and are firm in

your different opinions; 'twere better, therefore, you proceeded according to the particular sense of each of you, and give your thoughts distinctly in writing ——And, do you see, sirs, pray let me have a copy of what you say in English.

Bramble. Why, what is all we have been saying?—In English! Oh! but I forgot myself! you're a wit. ——But, however to please you, sir, you shall have it in as plain terms as the law will admit of.

Cimb. But I will have it, sir, without delay.

Bramb. That, sir, the law will not admit of; the courts are sitting at Westminster, and I am this moment obliged to be at every one of them, and 'twould be wrong if I should not be in the Hall to attend one of them at least; the rest would take it ill else:—— therefore I must leave what I have said to Mr Sergeant's consideration, and I will digest his arguments on my part, and you shall hear from me again, sir.

[*Exit* BRAMBLE.

Targ. Agreed, agreed.

Cimb. Mr Bramble is very quick—he parted a little abruptly.

Targ. He could not bear my argument; I pinched him to the quick about that Gr—gr—ber— [*Exit.*

Cimb. Madam, if you please I'll now attend you to the tea-table, where I shall hear your ladyship's reason and good sense, after all this law and gibberish.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

BEVIL *junior's Lodgings.*

Enter BEVIL *junior, with a Letter in his Hand, followed by* TOM.

Tom. Upon my life, sir, I know nothing of the matter: I never opened my lips to Mr Myrtle about any thing of your honour's letter to Madam Lucinda.

Bev. jun. What's the fool in such a fright for? I don't suppose you did: what I would know is, whether Mr Myrtle showed any suspicion, or asked you any questions, to lead you to say casually that you had carried any such letter for me this morning?

Tom. Why, sir, if he did ask me any questions, how could I help it?

Bev. jun. I don't say you could, oaf! I am not questioning you, but him. What did he say to you?

Tom. Why, sir, when I came to his chambers to be dressed for the lawyer's part your honour was pleased to put me upon, he asked me if I had been to Mr Sealand's this morning?——So I told him, sir, I often went thither——because, sir, if I had not said that, he might have thought there was something more in my going now than at another time.

Bev. jun. Very well.—The fellow's caution I find has given him this jealousy. [*Aside.*]—Did he ask you no other questions?

Tom. Yes, sir—now I remember, as we came away in the hackney-coach from Mr Sealand's, Tom, says

43017

he, as I came in to your master this morning, he bade you go for an answer to a letter he had sent; pray did you bring him any? says he——Ah! says I, sir, your honour is pleased to joke with me; you have a mind to know whether I can keep a secret or no.

Bev. jun. And so, by showing him you could, you told him you had one?

Tom. Sir—— [*Confusedly.*

Bev. jun. What mean actions does jealousy make a man stoop to! how poorly has he used art with a servant, to make him betray his master!—Well, and when did he give you this letter for me?

Tom. Sir, he writ it before he pulled off his lawyer's gown at his own chambers.

Bev. jun. Very well, and what did he say when you brought him my answer to it?

Tom. He looked a little out of humour, sir, and said it was very well.

Bev. jun. I knew he would be grave upon't—Wait without.

Tom. Hum! 'gad I don't like this: I am afraid we are in the wrong box here—— [*Exit* TOM.

Bev. jun. I put on a serenity while my fellow was present, but I have never been more thoroughly disturbed. This hot man, to write me a challenge on supposed artificial dealing, when I professed myself his friend!—I can live contented without glory, but I cannot suffer shame. What's to be done? But first, let me consider Lucinda's letter again. [*Reads.*

Sir, I hope it is consistent with the laws a woman ought to impose upon herself, to acknowledge that your manner of declining a treaty of marriage in our family, and desiring the refusal may come from me, has something more engaging in it than the courtship of him who I fear will fall to my lot, except your friend exerts himself for our common safety and happiness. I have reasons for desiring Mr Myrtle may not know

of this letter till hereafter, and am your most obliged humble servant, . . . LUCINDA SEALAND.

Well, but the postscript. [*Reads.*

I won't, upon second thoughts, hide any thing from you: but my reason for concealing this is, that Mr Myrtle has a jealousy in his temper which gives me some terrors; but my esteem for him inclines me to hope that only an ill effect which sometimes accompanies a tender love, and what may be cured by a careful and unblameable conduct.

Thus has this lady made me her friend and confident, and put herself in a kind under my protection. I cannot tell him immediately the purport of this letter, except I could cure him of the violent and untractable passion of jealousy. But then this duelling, which custom has imposed upon every man who would live with reputation and honour in the world, how must I preserve myself from imputations there? he'll forsooth call it, or think it, fear, if I explain without fighting—But his letter—I'll read it again—

Sir, you have used me basely, in corresponding and carrying on a treaty, where you told me you were indifferent. I have changed my sword since I saw you, which advertisement I thought proper to send you against the next meeting between you and the injured CHARLES MYRTLE.

Enter TOM.

Tom. Mr Myrtle, sir: would your honour please to see him?

Bev. jun. Why, you stupid creature! let Mr Myrtle wait at my lodgings! Show him up. [*Exit* TOM.] Well, I am resolved upon my carriage to him. ——He is in love, and in every circumstance of life

a little distrustful, which I must allow for.—But here he is.

Enter TOM, *introducing* MYRTLE.

Sir, I am extremely obliged to you for this honour ——But, sir, you, with your very discerning face, leave the room. [*Exit* TOM.]—Well, Mr Myrtle, your commands with me?

Myrt. The time, the place, our long acquaintance, and many other circumstances which affect me on this occasion, oblige me, without farther ceremony or conference, to desire you would not only, as you already have, acknowledge the receipt of my letter, but also comply with the request in it. I must have farther notice taken of my message than these half lines—"I have yours—I shall be at home"—

Bev. jun. Sir, I own I have received a letter from you, in a very unusual style, but as I design every thing in this matter shall be your own action, your own seeking, I shall understand nothing but what you are pleased to confirm face to face; and I have already forgot the contents of your epistle.

Myrt. This cool manner is very agreeable to the abuse you have already made of my simplicity and frankness; and I see your moderation tends to your own advantage and not mine, to your own safety, not consideration of your friend.

Bev. jun. My own safety, Mr Myrtle!

Myrt. Your own safety, Mr Bevil.

Bev. jun. Look you, Mr Myrtle, there's no disguising, that I understand what you would be at; but, sir, you know I have often dared to disapprove of the decisions a tyrant custom has introduced, to the breach of all laws both divine and human.

Myrt. Mr Bevil! Mr Bevil! it would be a good first principle in those, who have so tender a conscience that way, to have as much abhorrence of doing injuries as——

Bev. jun. As what?

Myrt. As fear of answering for them.

Bev. jun. As fear of answering for them? but that apprehension is just or blameable according to the object of that fear.——I have often told you, in confidence of heart, I abhorred the daring to offend the Author of life, and rushing into his presence. I say, by the very same act, to commit the crime against him, and immediately to urge on to his tribunal.

Myrt. Mr Bevil, I must tell you, this coolness, this gravity, this show of conscience, shall never cheat me of my mistress. You have indeed the best excuse for life, the hopes of possessing Lucinda; but consider, sir, I have as much reason to be weary of it, if I am to lose her; and my first attempt to recover her shall be to let her see the dauntless man who is to be her guardian and protector.

Bev. jun. Sir, show me but the least glimpse of argument, that I am authorised, by my own hand, to vindicate any lawless insult of this nature, and I will show thee, to chastise thee hardly deserves the name of courage. Slight inconsiderate man! There is, Mr Myrtle, no such terror in quick anger, and you shall, you know not why, be cool, as you have, you know not why, been warm.

Myrt. Is the woman one loves so little an occasion of anger? You, perhaps, who know not what it is to love, who have your ready, your commodious, your foreign trinket, for your loose hours, and from your fortune, your specious outward carriage, and other lucky circumstances, as easy a way to the possession of a woman of honour, you know nothing of what it is to be alarmed, to be distracted, with anxiety and terror of losing more than life. Your marriage, happy man! goes on like common business, and in the interim you have your rambling captive, your Indian princess, for your soft moments of dalliance, your convenient, your ready, Indiana.

Bev. jun. You have touched me beyond the patience of a man, and I'm excusable in the guard of innocence, or from the infirmity of human nature, which can bear no more, to accept your invitation, and observe your letter.——Sir, I'll attend you.

Enter TOM.

Tom. Did you call, sir? I thought you did; I heard you speak loud.

Bev. jun. Yes; go call a coach.

Tom. Sir—Master—Mr Myrtle—Friends—Gentlemen—what d'ye mean? I'm but a servant, or——

Bev. jun. Call a coach. [*Exit* TOM.

[*A long Pause, walking sullenly by each other—Aside.*] Shall I, though provoked to the uttermost, recover myself at the entrance of a third person, and that my servant too, and not have respect enough to all I have ever been receiving from infancy, the obligation to the best of fathers; to an unhappy virgin too, whose life depends on mine? [*Shutting the Door—To* MYRTLE.] I have, thank Heaven, had time to recollect myself, and shall not, for fear of what such a rash man as you think of me, keep longer unexplained the false appearances under which your infirmity of temper makes you suffer, when, perhaps, too much regard to a false point of honour makes me prolong that suffering.

Myrt. I am sure Mr Bevil cannot doubt but I had rather have satisfaction from his innocence than his sword.

Bev. jun. Why then would you ask it first that way?

Myrt. Consider, you kept your temper yourself no longer than till I spoke to the disadvantage of her you loved.

Bev. jun. True. But let me tell you I have saved you from the most exquisite distress, even though you

had succeeded in the dispute. I know you so well, that I am sure, to have found this letter about a man you had killed, would have been worse than death to yourself.—Read it.—When he is thoroughly mortify'd, and shame has got the better of jealousy, he will deserve to be assisted towards obtaining Lucinda. [*Aside.*

Myrt. With what a superiority has he turned the injury upon me, as the aggressor! I begin to fear I have been too far transported—"*A treaty in our family!*" is not that saying too much? I shall relapse ——But I find (on the postscript) "*something like jealousy*"—With what face can I see my benefactor, my advocate, whom I have treated like a betrayer? ——Oh, Bevil! with what words shall I——

Bev. jun. There needs none; to convince is much more than to conquer.

Myrt. But can you——

Bev. jun. You have o'erpaid the inquietude you gave me, in the change I see in you towards me. Alas! what machines are we! thy face is altered to that of another man, to that of my companion, my friend.

Myrt. That I could be such a precipitate wretch!

Bev. jun. Pray, no more.

Myrt. Let me reflect how many friends have died by the hands of friends, for want of temper; and you must give me leave to say again and again how much I am beholden to that superior spirit you have subdued me with.—What had become of one of us, or perhaps both, had you been as weak as I was, and as incapable of reason!

Bev. jun. I congratulate to us both the escape from ourselves, and hope the memory of it will make us dearer friends than ever.

Myrt. Dear Bevil! your friendly conduct has convinced me, that there is nothing manly but what is conducted by reason, and agreeable to the practice of virtue and justice; and yet how many have been sa-

crificed to that idol, the unreasonable opinion of men! Nay, they are so ridiculous in it, that they often use their swords against each other with dissembled anger and real fear:

Betray'd by honour, and compell'd by shame,
They hazard being to preserve a name;
Nor dare inquire into the dread mistake,
Till plung'd in sad eternity they wake. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

St James's Park.

Enter SIR JOHN BEVIL *and* MR SEALAND.

Sir J. Bev. Give me leave, however, Mr Sealand, as we are upon a treaty for uniting our families, to mention only the business of an ancient house.—Genealogy and descent are to be of some consideration in an affair of this sort——

Mr Seal. Sir John, value yourself as you please upon your ancient house, I am to talk freely of every thing you are pleased to put into your bill of rates on this occasion.—Yet, sir, I have made no objections to your son's family—it is his morals that I doubt.

Sir J Bev. Sir, I can't help saying, that what might injure a citizen's credit, may be no stain to a gentleman's honour.

Mr Seal. Sir John, the honour of a gentleman is liable to be tainted by as small a matter as the credit of a trader: we are talking of a marriage, and in such a case, the father of a young woman will not think it an addition to the honour or credit of her lover—that he is a keeper.

Sir J. Bev. Mr Sealand, don't take upon you to spoil my son's marriage with any woman else.

Mr Seal. Sir John, let him apply to any woman else, and have as many mistresses as he pleases.

Sir J. Bev. My son, sir, is a discreet and sober gentleman.

Mr Seal. Sir, I never saw a man that wenched soberly and discreetly that ever left it off—the decency observed in the practice hides, from the sinner even, the iniquity of it.

Sir J. Bev. But my son, sir, is, in the eye of the world, a gentleman of merit.

Mr Seal. I own to you I think him so—But, Sir John, I am a man exercised and experienced in chances and disasters; I lost in my earlier years a very fine wife, and with her a poor little infant; this makes me perhaps overcautious to preserve the second bounty of Providence to me, and be as careful as I can of this child.—You'll pardon me: my poor girl, sir, is as valuable to me as your boasted son to you.

Sir J. Bev. Why that's one very good reason, Mr Sealand, why I wish my son had her.

Mr Seal. There is nothing but this strange lady here, this Incognita, that can be objected to him—Here and there a man falls in love with an artful creature, and gives up all the motives of life to that one passion.

Sir J. Bev. A man of my son's understanding cannot be supposed to be one of them.

Mr Seal. Very wise men have been so enslaved; and when a man marries with one of them upon his hands, he may love his wife for a month, perhaps—then good bye, madam—the show's over—Ah! John Dryden points out such a husband to a hair, where he says,

> And while abroad so prodigal the dolt is,
> Poor spouse at home is ragged as a colt is.

Now, in plain terms, sir, I shall not care to have my poor girl turned a grazing, and that must be the case, when—

Sir J. Bev. But pray consider, sir, my son——

Mr Seal. Look you, sir, I'll make the matter short. This unknown lady, as I told you, is all the objection I have to him: but one way or other he is or has been certainly engaged to her—I am therefore resolved this very afternoon to visit her: now from her behaviour or appearance I shall soon be let into what I may fear or hope for.

Sir J. Bev. Sir, I am very confident there can be nothing inquired into relating to my son, that will not, upon being understood, turn to his advantage.

Mr Seal. I hope that as sincerely as you believe it—Sir John Bevil, when I am satisfied in this great point, if your son's conduct answers the character you give him, I shall wish your alliance more than that of any gentleman in Great Britain, and so your servant. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

BEVIL *junior's Lodgings.*

Enter TOM *and* PHILLIS.

Tom. Well, madam, if you must speak with Mr Myrtle, you shall; he is now with my master in the library.

Phil. But you must leave me alone with him, for he can't make me a present, nor I so handsomely take any thing from him before you; it would not be decent.

Tom. It will be very decent, indeed, for me to retire and leave my mistress with another man!

Phil. He is a gentleman, and will treat one properly.

Tom. I believe so—but, however, I won't be far off, and therefore will venture to trust you. I'll call him to you. [*Exit* TOM.

Phil. What a deal of pother and sputter here is between my mistress and Mr Myrtle! I could any hour of the day get her to her lover, and would do it—but she, forsooth, will allow no plot *to get him*; but if he can come to her, I know she would be glad of it; I must therefore do her an acceptable violence, and surprise her into his arms. I am sure I go by the best rule imaginable: if she were my maid, I should think her the best servant in the world for doing so by me.—

Enter MYRTLE *and* TOM.

Oh, sir! you and Mr Bevil are fine gentlemen, to let a lady remain under such difficulties as my poor mistress, and not attempt to set her at liberty, or release her from the danger of being instantly married to Cimberton.

Myrt. Tom has been telling—But what is to be done?

Phil. What is to be done!—when a man can't come at his mistress—why, can't you fire our house, or the next house to us, to make us run out, and you take us?

Myrt. How, Mrs Phillis!

Phil. Ay—let me see that rogue deny to fire a house, make a riot, or any other little thing, when there were no other way to come at me.

Tom. I am obliged to you, madam.

Phil. Why, don't we hear every day of people's hanging themselves for love, and won't they venture the hazard of being hanged for love?—O, were I a man——

Myrt. What manly thing would you have me undertake, according to your ladyship's notion of a man?

Phil. Only be at once what one time or other you may be, and wish to be, and must be.

Myrt. Dear girl, talk plainly to me, and consider, I, in my condition, can't be in very good humour—You say, to be at once what I must be.

Phil. Ay, ay—I mean no more than to be an old man; I saw you do it very well at the masquerade. In a word, old Sir Geoffry Cimberton is every hour expected in town, to join in the deeds and settlements for marrying Mr Cimberton——He is half blind, half lame, half deaf, half dumb; though, as to his passions and desires, he is as warm and ridiculous as when in the heat of youth.

Tom. Come, to the business, and don't keep the gentleman in suspense for the pleasure of being courted, as you serve me.

Phil. I saw you at the masquerade act such a one to perfection: go, and put on that very habit, and come to our house as Sir Geoffry: there is not one there, but myself, knows his person. They think you out of town, which you had as good be for ever, if you lose this opportunity.—I must be gone; I know I am wanted at home.

Myrt. My dear Phillis!

[*Catches and kisses her; and gives her Money.*

Phil. O fie! my kisses are not my own; you have committed violence; but I'll carry them to the right owner. [Tom *kisses her.*] Come, see me down stairs, [*To* Tom.] and leave the lover to think of his last game for the prize. [*Exeunt* Tom *and* Phillis.

Myrt. I think I will instantly attempt this wild expedient——the extravagance of it will make me less suspected, and it will give me opportunity to assert my own right to Lucinda, without whom I cannot

live. But I am so mortified at this conduct of mine towards poor Bevil! he must think meanly of me.—I know not how to reassume myself, and be in spirits enough for such an adventure as this——yet I must attempt it, if it be only to be near Lucinda, under her present perplexities. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

SEALAND'S *House.*

Enter PHILLIS, *with Lights before* MYRTLE, *disguised like old* SIR GEOFFRY, *supported by* MRS SEALAND, LUCINDA, *and* CIMBERTON.

Mrs Seal. Now I have seen you thus far, Sir Geoffry, will you excuse me a moment, while I give my necessary orders for your accommodation?

[*Exit* MRS SEALAND.

Myrt. I have not seen you, cousin Cimberton, since you were ten years old; and as it is incumbent on you to keep up your name and family, I shall, upon very reasonable terms, join with you in a settlement to that purpose; though I must tell you, cousin, this is the first merchant that has married into our house.

Luc. Deuce on them! am I a merchant because my father is? [*Aside.*

Myrt. But is he directly a trader at this time?

Cimb. There's no hiding the disgrace, sir; he trades to all parts of the world.

Myrt. We never had one of our family before, who descended from persons that did any thing.

Cimb. Sir, since it is a girl that they have, I am, for the honour of my family, willing to take it in again, and to sink it into our name, and no harm done.

Myrt. 'Tis prudently and generously resolved—— Is this the young thing?

Cimb. Yes, sir.

Phil. Good madam, don't be out of humour, but let them run to the utmost of their extravagance—— Hear them out.

Myrt. Can't I see her nearer?—my eyes are but weak.

Phil. Besides, I am sure the uncle has something worth your notice. I'll take care to get off the young one, and leave you to observe what may be wrought out of the old one for your good. [*Exit.*

Cimb. Madam, this old gentleman, your great uncle, desires to be introduced to you, and to see you nearer—— Approach, sir.

Myrt. By your leave, young lady—[*Puts on Spectacles.*] Cousin Cimberton, she has exactly that sort of neck and bosom, for which my sister Gertrude was so much admired in the year sixty-one, before the French dresses first discovered any thing in women below the chin.

Luc. Chin, quotha!—I don't believe my passionate lover there knows whether I have one or not—Ha! ha!

Enter PHILLIS.

Phil. [*To* CIMBERTON.] Sir, my lady desires to show the apartments to you, that she intends for Sir Geoffry.

Cimb. Well, sir, by the time you have sufficiently gazed and sunned yourself in the beauties of my spouse there, I will wait on you again.

[*Exeunt* CIMBERTON *and* PHILLIS.

Myrt. Were it not, madam, that I might be troublesome, there is something of importance, though we are alone, which I would say, more safe from being heard.

Luc. There is something in this old fellow, methinks, that raises my curiosity.

Myrt. To be free, madam, I as heartily contemn this kinsman of mine as you do, and am sorry to see so much beauty and merit devoted by your parents to so insensible a possessor.

Luc. Surprising!—I hope, then, sir, you will not contribute to the wrong you are so generous to pity, whatever may be the interest of your family.

Myrt. This hand of mine shall never be employed to sign any thing against your good and happiness.

Luc. I am sorry, sir, it is not in my power to make you proper acknowledgments, but there is a gentleman in the world whose gratitude will, I'm sure, be worthy of the favour.

Myrt. All the thanks I desire, madam, are in your power to give.

Luc. Name them, and command them.

Myrt. Only, madam, that the first time you are alone with your lover, you will with open arms receive him.

Luc. As willingly as heart could wish it.

Myrt. Thus then he claims your promise. Oh, Lucinda!

Luc. Oh, a cheat! a cheat! a cheat!

Myrt. Hush! 'tis I, 'tis I, your lover; Myrtle himself, madam.

Luc. Oh, bless me! what rashness and folly to surprise me so.——But, hush—my mother——

Enter MRS SEALAND *and* CIMBERTON.

Mrs Seal. How now! what's the matter?

Luc. Oh, madam! as soon as you left the room, my uncle fell into a sudden fit, and—and—so I cried out for help to support him, and conduct him to his chamber.

Mrs Seal. That was kindly done.—Alas, sir, how do you find yourself?

Myrt. Never was taken in so odd a way in my life ——Pray lead me—Oh! I was talking here—Pray carry me—to my cousin Cimberton's young lady—

Mrs Seal. [*Aside.*] My cousin Cimberton's young lady! How zealous he is, even in his extremity, for the match! a right Cimberton.

[CIMBERTON *and* LUCINDA *lead him, as one in pain.*

Cimb. Pox, uncle, you will pull my ear off!

Luc. Pray, uncle—you will squeeze me to death!

Mrs Seal. No matter, no matter—he knows not what he does.—Come, sir, shall I help you out?

Myrt. By no means; I'll trouble nobody but my young cousins here.

[*Exeunt* MYRT. *led by* CIMB. *and* LUC.

SCENE II.

Charing Cross.

Enter MR SEALAND *and* HUMPHREY.

Mr Seal. I am very glad, Mr Humphrey, that you agree with me, that it is for our common good I should look thoroughly into this matter.

Humph. I am indeed of that opinion; for there is

no artifice, nothing concealed in our family which ought in justice to be known. I need not desire you, sir, to treat the lady with care and respect.

Mr Seal. Mr Humphrey—I shall not be rude, though I design to be a little abrupt, and come into the matter at once, to see how she will bear upon a surprise——

Humph. That's the door, sir; I wish you success. [*Exit.*

Mr Seal. [*Knocks.*] I'll carry this matter with an air of authority, to inquire, though I make an errand to begin discourse. [*Knocks again.*

Enter a FOOTBOY.

So, young man, is your lady within?

Foot. Alack, sir! I am but a country boy—I don't know whether she is or noa; but an' you'll stay a bit, I'll goa and ask the gentlewoman that's with her.

Mr Seal. Why, sirrah, though you are a country boy, you can see, can't you? you know whether she is at home when you see her, don't you?

Foot. Nay, nay, I'm not such a country lad neither, master, to think she is at home because I see her: I have been in town but a month, and lost one place already for believing my own eyes.

Mr Seal. Why, sirrah! have you learned to lie already?

Foot. Ah, master, things that are lies in the country, are not lies at London—I begin to know my business a little better than so——but an' you please to walk in, I'll call a gentlewoman to you that can tell you for certain—she can make bold to ask my lady herself.

Mr Seal. O, then she is within, I find, though you dare not say so.

Foot. Nay, nay, that's neither here nor there; what matters whether she is within or no, if she has not a mind to see any body?

Mr Seal. I can't tell, sirrah, whether you are arch or simple; but, however, get me a direct answer, and here's a shilling for you.

Foot. Will you please to walk in? I'll see what I can do for you.

Mr Seal. I see you will be fit for your business in time, child; but I expect to meet with nothing but extraordinaries in such a house.

Foot. Such a house, sir! you ha'n't seen it yet.—Pray walk in.

Mr Seal. Sir, I'll wait upon you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

INDIANA'S *House.*

Enter ISABELLA *and* FOOTBOY.

Isa. So, Daniel, what news with you?

Foot. Madam, there's a gentleman below wou'd speak with my lady.

Isa. Sirrah! don't you know Mr Bevil yet?

Foot. Madam, 'tis not the gentleman that comes every day and asks for you, and won't go in till he knows whether you are with her or no.

Isa. Ha! that's a particular I did not know before.—Well, be it who it will, let him come up to me. [*Exit* FOOTBOY.

Enter FOOTBOY *with* MR SEALAND.—ISABELLA *looks amazed.*

Mr Seal. Madam, I can't blame your being a little surprised to see a perfect stranger make a visit; and——

Isa. I am indeed surprised——I see he does not know me. [*Aside.*

Mr Seal. You are very prettily lodged here, madam; in troth you seem to have every thing in plenty—a thousand a-year, I warrant you, upon this pretty nest of rooms, and the dainty one within them.

[*Aside, and looking about.*

Isa. [*Apart.*] Twenty years, it seems, have less effect in the alteration of a man of thirty than of a girl of fourteen—How shall I contain my surprise and satisfaction!—He must not know me yet.

Mr Seal. Madam, I hope I don't give you any disturbance; but there is a young lady here, with whom I have a particular business to discourse, and I hope she will admit me to that favour.

Isa. Why, sir, have you had any notice concerning her? I wonder who could give it you.

Mr Seal. That, madam, is fit only to be communicated to herself.

Isa. You shall see her presently, sir; for now I am as a mother, and will trust her with you. [*Exit.*

Mr Seal. As a mother! right; that's the old phrase for one of those commode ladies. But here comes the precious lady herself: in truth a very sightly woman!

Enter INDIANA.

Ind. I am told, sir, you have some affair that requires your speaking with me.

Mr Seal. Yes, madam. There came to my hands a bill drawn by Mr Bevil, which is payable to-morrow, and he, in the intercourse of business, sent it to me, who have cash of his, and desired me to send a servant with it; but I have made bold to bring you the money myself.

Ind. Sir, was that necessary?

Mr Seal. No, madam; but to be free with you, the fame of your beauty, and the regard which Mr

Bevil is a little too well known to have for you, excited my curiosity.

Ind. Too well known to have for me! Your sober appearance, sir, which my friend described, made me expect no rudeness or absurdity at least—Who's there? Sir, if you pay the money to a servant 'twill be as well.

Mr Seal. Pray, madam, be not offended; I came hither on an innocent, nay a virtuous, design; and if you will have patience to hear me, it may be as useful to you, as you are in friendship with Mr Bevil, as to my only daughter, whom I was this day disposing of.

Ind. You make me hope, sir, I have mistaken you: I am composed again: be free, say on—what I am afraid to hear. [*Aside.*

Mr Seal. I feared indeed an unwarranted passion here, but I did not think it was in abuse of so worthy an object, so accomplished a lady, as your sense and mien bespeak—but the youth of our age care not what merit and virtue they bring to shame, so they gratify——

Ind. Sir——you are going into very great errors—but as you are pleased to say you see something in me that has changed at least the colour of your suspicions, so has your appearance altered mine, and made me earnestly attentive to what has any way concerned you, to inquire into my affairs and character.

Mr Seal. How sensibly, with what an air, she talks!

Ind. Good sir, be seated—and tell me tenderly—keep all your suspicions concerning me alive, that you may in a proper and prepared way acquaint me why the care of your daughter obliges a person of your seeming worth and fortune to be thus inquisitive about a wretched, helpless, friendless—[*Weeping.*] But I beg your pardon—though I am an orphan, your

child is not, and your concern for her, it seems, has brought you hither——I'll be composed—pray go on, sir.

Mr Seal. How could Mr Bevil be such a monster, to injure such a woman?

Ind. No, sir, you wrong him; he has not injured me—my support is from his bounty.

Mr Seal. Bounty! when gluttons give high prices for delicates, they are prodigious bountiful!

Ind. Still, still you will persist in that error—but my own fears tell me all. You are the gentleman, I suppose, for whose happy daughter he is designed a husband by his good father; and he has, perhaps, consented to the overture, and he is to be, perhaps, this night a bridegroom.

Mr Seal. I own he was intended such; but, madam, on your account, I am determined to defer my daughter's marriage till I am satisfied, from your own mouth, of what nature are the obligations you are under to him.

Ind. His actions, sir, his eyes, have only made me think he designed to make me the partner of his heart. The goodness and gentleness of his demeanour made me misinterpret all; 'twas my own hope, my own passion, that deluded me; he never made one amorous advance to me; his large heart and bestowing hand have only helped the miserable: nor know I why, but from his mere delight in virtue, that I have been his care, the object on which to indulge and please himself with pouring favours.

Mr Seal. Madam, I know not why it is, but I, as well as you, am, methinks, afraid of entering into the matter I came about; but 'tis the same thing as if we had talked ever so distinctly—he ne'er shall have a daughter of mine.

Ind. If you say this from what you think of me, you wrong yourself and him. Let not me, miserable though I may be, do injury to my benefactor: no,

sir, my treatment ought rather to reconcile you to his virtues.—If to bestow without a prospect of return, if to delight in supporting what might, perhaps, be thought an object of desire, with no other view than to be her guard against those who would not be so disinterested, if these actions, sir, can in a carefu. parent's eye commend him to a daughter, give yours, sir: give her to my honest, generous, Bevil!—What have I to do but sigh, and weep; to rave, run wild, a lunatic in chains, or, hid in darkness, mutter in distracted starts, and broken accents, my strange, strange, story!

Mr Seal. Take comfort, madam.

Ind. All my comfort must be to expostulate in madness, to relieve with frenzy my despair, and, shrieking, to demand of fate why, why was I born to such variety of sorrows?

Mr Seal. If I have been the least occasion——

Ind. No: 'Twas Heaven's high will I should be such—to be plundered in my cradle, tossed on the seas, and even there, an infant captive, to lose my mother, hear but of my father—to be adopted, lose my adopter, then plunged again in worse calamities!

Mr Seal. An infant captive!

Ind. Yet then to find the most charming of mankind once more to set me free from what I thought the last distress, to load me with his services, his bounties, and his favours, to support my very life in a way that stole, at the same time, my very soul itself from me.

Mr Seal. And has young Bevil been this worthy man?

Ind. Yet then again, this very man to take another, without leaving me the right, the pretence, of easing my fond heart with tears!—for oh! I can't reproach him, though the same hand, that raised me to this height, now throws me down the precipice.

Mr Seal. Dear lady! Oh, yet one moment's pa-

tience! my heart grows full with your affliction; but yet there's something in your story that promises relief when you least hope it.

Ind. My portion here is bitterness and sorrow.

Mr Seal. Do not think so. Pray answer me; does Bevil know your name and family?

Ind. Alas, too well! Oh! could I be any other thing than what I am!——I'll tear away all traces of my former self, my little ornaments, the remains of my first state, the hints of what I ought to have been——

[*In her Disorder she throws away her Bracelet, which* SEALAND *takes up, and looks earnestly at it.*

Mr Seal. Ha! what's this? my eyes are not deceived! it is, it is the same; the very bracelet which I bequeathed my wife at our last mournful parting.

Ind. What said you, sir? your wife! Whither does my fancy carry me? what means this new-felt motion at my heart? And yet again my fortune but deludes me; for, if I err not, sir, your name is Sealand: but my lost father's name was——

Mr Seal. Danvers, was it not?

Ind. What new amazement! that is, indeed, my family.

Mr Seal. My child, my child!

Ind. Ah, gracious Heaven! Is it possible? Do I embrace my father?

Mr Seal. And do I hold thee? These passions are too strong for utterance.—Rise, rise, my child, and give my tears their way.—Know, then, when my misfortunes drove me to the Indies, for reasons too tedious to mention, I changed my name of Danvers into Sealand.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. If yet there wants an explanation of your wonder, behold your sister, Isabella!

Mr Seal. My sister!

Isa. Now, dearest niece, my groundless fears, my painful cares, no more shall vex thee: if I have wronged thy noble lover with too hard suspicions, my just concern for thee, I hope, will plead my pardon.

Mr Seal. Oh! make him then the full amends, and be yourself the messenger of joy. Tell him, the reward of all his virtues waits on his acceptance. [*Exit* ISABELLA.] My dearest Indiana!

[*Turns and embraces her.*

Ind. Have I then at last a father's sanction on my love; his bounteous hand to give, and make my heart a present worthy of Bevil's generosity?

Mr Seal. Oh, my child, how are our sorrows past o'erpaid by such a meeting! In one day to find thee thus, and thus bestow thee, in such perfect happiness, is ample, ample reparation! and yet again, the merit of thy lover——

Ind. O, had I spirits left to tell you of his actions; how strongly filial duty has suppressed his love, and how concealment still has doubled all his obligations, the pride, the joy of his alliance, sir, would warm your heart, as he has conquered mine.

Mr Seal. How laudable is love, when born of virtue! I burn to embrace him.

Ind. See, sir, my aunt already has succeeded, and brought him to your wishes.

Enter ISABELLA, *with* SIR JOHN BEVIL, BEVIL *jun.* MRS SEALAND, CIMBERTON, MYRTLE, *and* LUCINDA.

Sir J. Bev. [*Entering.*] Where, where's this scene of wonder!—Mr Sealand, I congratulate, on this

occasion, our mutual happiness—Your good sister, sir, has, with the story of your daughter's fortune, filled us with surprise and joy. Now all exceptions are removed; my son has now avowed his love, and turned all former jealousies and doubts to approbation, and I am told your goodness has consented to reward him.

Mr Seal. If, sir, a fortune equal to his father's hopes can make this object worthy his acceptance.

Bev. jun. I hear your mention, sir, of fortune with pleasure, only as it may prove the means to reconcile the best of fathers to my love; let him be provident, but let me be happy.—My ever destined, my acknowledged wife! [*Embracing* INDIANA.

Ind. Wife!—Oh! my ever loved, my lord, my master!

Sir J. Bev. I congratulate myself, as well as you, that I have a son, who could, under such disadvantages, discover your great merit.

Mr Seal. Oh, Sir John, how vain, how weak is human prudence! what care, what foresight, what imagination could contrive such bless'd events to make our children happy, as Providence in one short hour has laid before us?

Cimb. [*To* MRS SEALAND.] I am afraid, madam, Mr Sealand is a little too busy for our affair; if you please we'll take another opportunity.

Mrs Seal. Let us have patience, sir.

Cimb. But we make Sir Geoffry wait, madam.

Myrt. O, sir, I'm not in haste.

[*During this,* EVIL *jun. presents* LUCINDA *to* INDIANA.

Mr Seal. But here, here's our general benefactor. Excellent young man! that could be at once a lover to her beauty, and a parent to her virtue!

Bev. jun. If you think that an obligation, sir, give me leave to overpay myself in the only instance that

can now add to my felicity, by begging you to bestow this lady on Mr Myrtle.

Mr Seal. She is his without reserve; I beg he may be sent for.——Mr Cimberton, notwithstanding you never had my consent, yet there is, since I saw you, another objection to your marriage with my daughter.

Cimb. I hope, sir, your lady has concealed nothing from me?

Mr Seal. Troth, sir, nothing but what was concealed from myself; another daughter, who has an undoubted title to half my estate.

Cimb. How, Mr Sealand! why then, if half Mrs Lucinda's fortune is gone, you can't say that any of my estate is settled upon her; I was in treaty for the whole: but if that's not to be come at, to be sure there can be no bargain.—Sir—I have nothing to do but to take my leave of your good lady, my cousin, and beg pardon for the trouble I have given this old gentleman.

Myrt. That you have, Mr Cimberton, with all my heart. [*Discovers himself.*

All. Mr Myrtle!

Myrt. And I beg pardon of the whole company, that I assumed the person of Sir Geoffry only to be present at the danger of this lady's being disposed of, and in her utmost exigence to assert my right to her, which if her parents will ratify, as they once favoured my pretensions, no abatement of fortune shall lessen her value to me.

Luc. Generous man!

Mr Seal. If, sir, you can overlook the injury of being in treaty with one who as meanly left her, as you have generously asserted your right in her, she is yours.

Mrs Seal. Well, however, I'm glad the girl's disposed of any way. [*Aside.*

Bev. jun. Myrtle, no longer rivals now, but brothers.

Myrt. Dear Bevil! you are born to triumph over me; but now our competition ceases: I rejoice in the pre-eminence of your virtue, and your alliance adds charms to Lucinda.

Sir J. Bev. Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have set the world a fair example; your happiness is owing to your constancy and merit, and the several difficulties you have struggled with evidently show,

Whate'er the generous mind itself denies,
The secret care of Providence supplies. [*Exeunt.*

THE END.

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REMARKS.

It is certain that Young was no enthusiastic admirer of Shakspeare's "Othello."—To suppose he was, is to accuse him of high presumption in hoping to write a still better play. For that he could take the same subject, which an admired author had used with infinite success, and not hope to transcend him, agrees but ill with the ambition of any dramatist, much less with that of the aspiring Young.

"The Revenge" is so excellent a production, that the reader will forgive the author's attempt, and compassionate his failure. In one of his characters, indeed, he has surpassed the genius of Shakspeare—but immorally so—he has adorned malice and its kindred vices with a sentiment appropriate to the rarest virtue—scrupulous regard for unblemished honour.

The high-sounding vengeance of Zanga charms every heart, whilst the malicious purposes of Iago fill every bosom with abhorrence.

Another advantage is given to Zanga in his guilt; the persons whom he involves in utter ruin claim far less sympathy than Shakspeare's Othello and Desdemona. Alonzo can excite no interest equal to the first, and Leonora sinks even beneath comparison before the last.

Dr Johnson has said, that the inferior characters in the tragedy of "Othello" would make a very good play, were the three superior ones wholly omitted: and certainly Cassio, Roderigo, and Amelia, are all excellent parts. But, should this method be pursued with the tragedy of "The Revenge," when the best were left out, what could be done with the remaining few? Isabella, in particular, is a tool of such insignificance in herself, that, till her importance as an instrument is testified, it seems degrading to the proud mind and acute understanding of the imperious Moor, to trust his perilous design to a woman's secrecy, who gives no one proof to the audience of possessing self-restraint peculiar from the rest of her sex, and powerful enough to keep silence.

Deservedly high as this tragedy must ever rank among English dramas, it is but seldom brought upon the stage, and then the actor who performs Zanga must be its sole support. This character is of such magnitude, and so unprotected by those which surround him, that few performers will undertake to represent it: a less number still have succeeded in braving the danger. Mr Kemble stands foremost among those, and draws some splendid audiences every year merely to see *him*; though the intervals between his exits and entrances are sure to be passed in lassitude.

Dr Young has the praise of being an original poet, but this work cannot be brought as a proof; for, besides its resemblance to the "Othello" of Shakspeare, it is alleged he had also in his view the Abdelazer of

Mrs Behn, upon which character Zanga is a grand improvement.

The originality of Young must be found in his "Night-Thoughts;" those well-known poems that speak contemptuously of a world, which, if his most distinguished biographers can be relied upon, he loved as dearly as the gayest libertine.

It is a reflection more gloomy than the author's gloomiest composition, that Young was a man the very reverse of him whom the reader of his "Night-Thoughts" would suppose the writer to be.

Dr Edward Young was the son of the Dean of Sarum, and born at Upham, near Winchester, in June, 1681. He received his first education in that college; and, at Oxford, took the degree of doctor of civil law.

On quitting the university, where he had given testimony of his poetical talents, Young was admitted into the family of Lord Exeter, and became the tutor of Lord Burleigh, with whom he was to travel, and receive as his recompence an annuity for life. But the witty and profligate Duke of Wharton, who at that time rioted in all the vices and follies of London, allured him, by his friendship, to yield up this honourable engagement, and be a partner with him in all his excesses.

This eminent poet can easier be forgiven his youthful attachment to the pleasures of the world, than his aged anxiety after its honours. When the duke's protection ceased with his exile and death, Young took orders, as the only means of subsistence; and

became grave and political, as the only means of preferment. He preached excellent sermons on the duty of a Christian, and wrote as excellent pamphlets to traduce his neighbour, the Duke of Marlborough, when that neighbour was out of favour with the court.

He was fervent in public worship, both at church and in the dedications he sent forth with his various works; wherein he has praised man as he praised God; which gives rise to the suspicion, that he expected as valuable favours from the created as from the Creator.

Dr Young was married in 1732 to Lady Elizabeth Lee, daughter of the Earl of Lichfield, and the widow of Colonel Lee. About the year 1740, Lady Elizabeth died; and very shortly after, both a daughter she had by her first marriage, and that daughter's husband (a son of Lord Palmerston), departed this life.—Melancholy events, which Young has lamented in strains of pious sorrow in his favourite work.

Notwithstanding his afflictions, he survived these losses five-and-twenty years; then expired, at the age of eighty-four, enjoying his perfect senses to the last moment; and to the last moment he refused to see his only child, a son, who, for some youthful offence, had been banished his house; and yet that repentant child sent earnest supplications for pardon, and admission to his father's presence.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	COVENT GARDEN.	DRURY LANE.
DON ALONZO	*Mr C. Kemble.*	*Mr Barrymore.*
DON CARLOS	*Mr Brunton.*	*Mr Bartley.*
DON ALVAREZ	*Mr Murray.*	*Mr Powell.*
DON MANUEL	*Mr Creswell.*	*Mr Maddocks.*
ZANGA	*Mr Kemble.*	*Master Betty.*
LEONORA	*Mrs Litchfield.*	*Mrs Powell.*
ISABELLA	*Mrs Humphries.*	*Miss Boyce.*

SCENE,—Spain.

THE

REVENGE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

Battlements, with a Sea Prospect.

A Storm, with Thunder and Lightning.

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. Whether first nature, or long want of peace,
as wrought my mind to this, I cannot tell;
t horrors now are not displeasing to me: [*Thunder.*
·e this rocking of the battlements.

Enter ISABELLA.

Rage on, ye winds, burst, clouds, and waters roar!
You bear a just resemblance of my fortune,
And suit the gloomy habit of my soul.—
Who's there? My love!

Isa. Why have you left my bed?
Your absence more affrights me than the storm.
[*Thunder.*

Zan. The dead alone in such a night can rest,
And I indulge my meditation here.
Woman, away. I chuse to be alone.

Isa. I know you do, and therefore will not leave
you;

Excuse me, Zanga, therefore dare not leave you.
[*Thunder.*
Is this a night for walks of contemplation?
Something unusual hangs upon your heart,
And I will know it; by our loves I will.
To you I sacrificed my virgin fame;
Ask I too much to share in your distress?

Zan. In tears? Thou fool! then hear me, and be plunged
In hell's abyss, if ever it escape thee.
To strike thee with astonishment at once,
I hate Alonzo. First recover that,
And then thou shalt hear farther.

Isa. Hate Alonzo!
I own, I thought Alonzo most your friend,
And that he lost the master in that name.

Zan. Hear then. 'Tis twice three years since that great man
(Great let me call him, for he conquer'd me)
Made me the captive of his arm in fight.
He slew my father, and threw chains o'er me,
While I, with pious rage, pursued revenge.
I then was young, he placed me near his person,
And thought me not dishonour'd by his service.
One day, (may that returning day be night,
The stain, the curse, of each succeeding year!)
For something, or for nothing, in his pride
He struck me. (While I tell it, do I live?)
He smote me on the cheek——I did not stab him,
For that were poor revenge——E'er since, his folly
Has strove to bury it beneath a heap
Of kindnesses, and thinks it is forgot.
Insolent thought! and like a second blow!
Affronts are innocent, where men are worthless;
And such alone can wisely drop revenge.

Isa. But with more temper, Zanga, tell your story;
To see your strong emotions startles me.

Zan. Yes, woman, with the temper that befits it.

Has the dark adder venom? So have I,
When trod upon. Proud Spaniard, thou shalt feel me!
For from that day, that day of my dishonour,
I from that day have cursed the rising sun,
Which never fail'd to tell me of my shame.
I from that day have bless'd the coming night,
Which promised to conceal it! but in vain;
The blow return'd for ever in my dream.
Yet on I toil'd, and groan'd for an occasion
Of ample vengeance; none is yet arrived.
Howe'er, at present I conceive warm hopes
Of what may wound him sore in his ambition,
Life of his life, and dearer than his soul.
By nightly march he purposed to surprise
The Moorish camp; but I have taken care
They shall be ready to receive his favour.
Failing in this, a cast of utmost moment,
Would darken all the conquests he has won.

Isa. Just as I enter'd, an express arrived.

Zan. To whom?

Isa. His friend, Don Carlos.

Zan. Be propitious,
O, Mahomet, on this important hour,
And give at length my famish'd soul revenge!
What is revenge, but courage to call in
Our honour's debts, and wisdom to convert
Others' self-love into our own protection?
But see, the morning ray breaks in upon us;
I'll seek Don Carlos, and enquire my fate. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Palace.

Enter DON CARLOS *and* DON MANUEL.

Man. My lord Don Carlos, what brings your express?

Car. Alonzo's glory, and the Moor's defeat:
The field is strew'd with twice ten thousand slain,
Though he suspects his measures were betray'd.
He'll soon arrive. Oh, how I long to embrace
The first of heroes, and the best of friends!
I loved fair Leonora long before
The chance of battle gave me to the Moors,
And while I groan'd in bondage, I deputed
This great Alonzo, whom her father honours,
To be my gentle advocate in love.

Man. And what success?

Car. Alas, the cruel maid——
Indeed her father, who, though high at court,
And powerful with the king, has wealth at heart
To heal his devastation from the Moors,
Knowing I'm richly freighted from the east,
My fleet now sailing in the sight of Spain,
(Heav'n guard it safe through such a dreadful storm!)
Caresses me, and urges her to wed.

Man. Her aged father, see,
Leads her this way.

Car. She looks like radiant Truth,
Brought forward by the hand of hoary Time——
You to the port with speed, 'tis possible
Some vessel is arrived. [*Exit* MAN.] Heav'n grant it bring
Tidings which Carlos may receive with joy!

Enter DON ALVAREZ *and* LEONORA.

Alv. Don Carlos, I am labouring in your favour
With all a parent's soft authority,
And earnest counsel.
Car. Angels second you!
For all my bliss or misery hangs on it.
Alv. Daughter, the happiness of life depends
On our discretion, and a prudent choice;
Don Carlos is of ancient, noble blood,
And then his wealth might mend a prince's fortune.
For him the sun is labouring in the mines,
A faithful slave, and turning earth to gold.
His keels are freighted with that sacred power
By which even kings and emperors are made.
Sir, you have my good wishes, and I hope
[*To* CARLOS.
My daughter is not indisposed to hear you. [*Exit.*
Car. Oh, Leonora! why art thou in tears?
Because I am less wretched than I was?
Before your father gave me leave to woo you,
Hush'd was your bosom, and your eye serene.
Leon. Think you my father too indulgent to me,
That he claims no dominion o'er my tears?
A daughter, sure, may be right dutiful,
Whose tears alone are free from a restraint.
Car. Ah, my torn heart!
Leon. Regard not me, my lord,
I shall obey my father.
Car. Disobey him,
Rather than come thus coldly, than come thus
With absent eyes and alienated mien,
Suff'ring address, the victim of my love.
Love calls for love. Not all the pride of beauty,
Those eyes, that tell us what the sun is made of,
Those lips, whose touch is to be bought with life,
These hills of driven snow, which seen art felt;

All these possess'd, are nought, but as they are
The proof, the substance of an inward passion,
And the rich plunder of a taken heart.

Leon. I pray, my lord, no more.

Car. Must I despair then? Do not shake me thus:
Heav'ns! what a proof I gave but two nights past
Of matchless love! To fling me at thy feet,
I slighted friendship, and I flew from fame;
Nor heard the summons of the next day's battle:
But, darting headlong to thy arms, I left
The promised fight, I left Alonzo too,
To stand the war, and quell a world alone.

[*Drums and Trumpets.*

Leon. The victor comes. My lord, I must withdraw.

Car. And must you go?

Leon. Why should you wish me stay?
Your friend's arrival will bring comfort to you,
My presence none; it pains you and myself;
For both our sakes, permit me to withdraw. [*Exit.*

[*Flourish of Drums and Trumpets.*

Enter DON ALONZO, *with* ATTENDANTS.

Car. Alonzo!

Alon. Carlos!——I am whole again;
Clasp'd in thy arms, it makes my heart entire.

Car. Whom dare I thus embrace? The conqueror Of Alric?

Alon. Yes, much more—Don Carlos' friend.
The conquest of the world would cost me dear,
Should it beget one thought of distance in thee.
I rise in virtues to come nearer to thee.
'Twas Carlos conquer'd, 'twas his cruel chains
Inflamed me to a rage unknown till then,
And threw my former actions far behind.

Car. I love fair Leonora. How I love her!

Yet still I find (I know not how it is)
Another heart, another soul for thee.
Thy friendship warms, it raises, it transports
Like music, pure the joy, without allay,
Whose very rapture is tranquillity:
But love, like wine, gives a tumultuous bliss,
Heighten'd indeed beyond all mortal pleasures;
But mingles pangs and madness in the bowl.

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. Manuel, my lord, returning from the port
On business both of moment and of haste,
Humbly begs leave to speak in private with you.
Car. In private!—Ha!—Alonzo, I'll return;
No business can detain me long from thee. [*Exit.*
Zan. My lord Alonzo, I obey'd your orders.
Alon. Will the fair Leonora pass this way?
Zan. She will, my lord, and soon.
Alon. Come near me, Zanga;
For I dare open all my heart to thee.
Never was such a day of triumph known!
There's not a wounded captive in my train,
That slowly follow'd my proud chariot wheels,
With half a life, and beggary, and chains,
But is a god to me: I am most wretched.——
In his captivity, thou know'st, Don Carlos,
My friend, (and never was a friend more dear)
Deputed me his advocate in love;
What did I do?——I loved myself. Indeed,
One thing there is might lessen my offence,
(If such offence admits of being lessen'd)
I thought him dead; for (by what fate I know not)
His letters never reach'd me.
Zan. Thanks to Zanga,
Who thence contrived that evil which has happen'd.
[*Aside.*
Alon. Yes, cursed of Heaven! I loved, myself; and now,

In a late action, rescued from the Moors,
I have brought home my rival in my friend.
Zan. We hear, my lord, that in that action too
Your interposing arm preserved his life.
Alon. It did—with more than the expense of mine;
For, O, this day is mention'd for their nuptials.
Zan. My lord, she comes.
Alon. I'll take my leave and die. [*Exit.*
Zan. Hadst thou a thousand lives, thy death would please me.
Unhappy fate! My country overcome!
My six years hope of vengeance quite expired!——
Would nature were—I will not fall alone:
But others' groans shall tell the world my death.
[*Aside, and exit.*

Enter LEONORA *and* ALONZO.

Alon. When nature ends with anguish like to this,
Sinners shall take their last leave of the sun,
And bid his light adieu. [*Weeps.*
Leon. The mighty conqueror
Dismay'd! I thought you gave the foe your sorrows.
Alon. O, cruel insult! are those tears your sport,
Which nothing but a love for you could draw?
Afric I quell'd, in hope by that to purchase
Your leave to sigh unscorn'd; but I complain not;
'Twas but a world, and you are—Leonora.
Leon. That passion which you boast of is your guilt,
A treason to your friend.
Alon. O, Leonora!
What could I do?—In duty to my friend,
I saw you: and to see is to admire.
For Carlos did I plead, and most sincerely.
You know I did. I sought but your esteem;
If that is guilt, an angel had been guilty.

Leon. If, from your guilt, none suffer'd but yourself,
It might be so——Farewell. [*Going.*
Alon. Who suffers with me? [*Takes her hand.*
Leon. Enjoy your ignorance, and let me go.
[*Weeps.*
Alon. What mean these tears?
Leon. I weep by chance; nor have my tears a meaning.
But, O, when first I saw Alonzo's tears,
I knew their meaning well!
Alon. Heavens! what is this?
Leon. Alonzo, pardon me the injury
Of loving you. I struggled with my passion,
And struggled long: let that be some excuse.
You well may wonder at such words as these;
I start at them myself, they fright my nature.
Great is my fault; but blame me not alone;
Give him a little blame, who took such pains
To make me guilty.
Alon. Blame you! you know I think your love a blessing
Beyond all human blessings! 'tis the price
Of sighs and groans, and a whole year of dying.
But, O, the curse of curses!——O, my friend!——
Leon. Alas!
Alon. What says my love? Speak, Leonora.
Leon. Was it for you, my lord, to be so quick
In finding out objections to our love?
Think you so strong my love, or weak my virtue,
It was unsafe to leave that part to me?
Alon. Is not the day then fixed for your espousals?
Leon. Indeed my father once had thought that way;
But marking how the marriage pain'd my heart,
Long he stood doubtful; but at last resolved,

Your counsel, which determines him in all,
Should finish the debate.
Alon. O, agony!
Must I not only lose her, but be made
Myself the instrument? Not only die,
But plunge the dagger in my heart myself?
Leon. What, do you tremble lest you should be mine?
For what else can you tremble? Not for that
My father places in your power to alter.
Alon. What's in my power? O, yes, to stab my friend!
Leon. To stab your friend were barbarous indeed:
Spare him—and murder me.
Alon. First perish all!
No, Leonora, I am thine for ever:
The groans of friendship shall be heard no more.
For whatsoever crime I can commit,
I've felt the pangs already.
Leon. Hold, Alonzo,
And hear a maid whom doubly thou hast conquer'd.
I love thy virtue as I love thy person,
And I adore thee for the pains it gave me;
But, as I felt the pains, I'll reap the fruit;
I'll shine out in my turn, and show the world
Thy great example was not lost upon me.
Thus then I tear me from thy hopes for ever.
Shall I contribute to Alonzo's crimes?
No, though the life-blood gushes from my heart,
You shall not be ashamed of Leonora;
Nay, never shrink: take back the bright example
You lately lent; O, take it while you may,
While I can give it you, and be immortal! [*Exit.*
Alon. She's gone, and I shall see that face no more;
But pine in absence, and till death adore.
When with cold dew my fainting brow is hung,
And my eyes darken, from my fault'ring tongue

Her name will tremble with a feeble moan,
And love with fate divide my dying groan.

[*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

The Palace.

Enter DON MANUEL *and* ZANGA.

Zan. If this be true, I cannot blame your pain
For wretched Carlos; 'tis but human in you.
But when arrived your dismal news?

Man. This hour.

Zan. What, not a vessel saved? And is Alvarez
Determined to deny his daughter to him?
That treasure was on shore; must that too join
The common wreck?

Man. Alvarez pleads, indeed,
That Leonora's heart is disinclined,
And pleads that only; so it was this morning,
When he concurr'd: the tempest broke the match,
And sunk his favour, when it sunk the gold.
The love of gold is double in his heart,
The vice of age and of Alvarez too.

Zan. How does Don Carlos bear it?

Man. Like a man,
Whose heart feels most a human heart can feel,
And reasons best a human heart can reason.

Zan. But is he then in absolute despair?

Man. Never to see his Leonora more.
And, quite to quench all future hope, Alvarez
Urges Alonzo to espouse his daughter
This very day; for he has learnt their loves.
Zan. Ha! was not that received with ecstacy
By Don Alonzo?
Man. Yes, at first; but soon
A damp came o'er him, it would kill his friend.
Zan. Not if his friend consented: and since now
He can't himself espouse her——
Man. Yet, to ask it
Has something shocking to a generous mind;
At least, Alonzo's spirit startles at it.
But I must leave you. Carlos wants support
In his severe affliction. [*Exit.*
Zan. Ha, it dawns!——
It rises to me like a new-found world
To mariners long time distress'd at sea,
Sore from a storm, and all their viands spent.
Hoa, Isabella!

Enter ISABELLA.

I thought of dying: better things come forward;
Vengeance is still alive: from her dark covert,
With all her snakes erect upon her crest,
She stalks in view, and fires me with her charms.
When, Isabella, arrived Don Carlos here?
Isa. Two nights ago.
Zan. That was the very night
Before the battle——Memory, set down that;
It has the essence of the crocodile,
Though yet but in the shell——I'll give it birth——
What time did he return?
Isa. At midnight.
Zan. So——
Say, did he see that night his Leonora?
Isa. No, my good lord.
Zan. No matter——

Go and fetch my tablets hither. [*Exit* ISABELLA.
Two nights ago my father's sacred shade
Thrice stalk'd around my bed, and smiled upon me;
He smiled a joy then little understood——
It must be so—and if so, it is vengeance
Worth waking of the dead for.

Enter ISABELLA *with the Tablets; ZANGA writes; then reads, as to himself.*

Thus it stands——
The father's fix'd——Don Carlos cannot wed——
Alonzo may——but that will hurt his friend——
Nor can he ask his leave——or, if he did,
He might not gain it——It is hard to give
Our own consent to ills, though we must bear them.
Were it not then a masterpiece, worth all
The wisdom I can boast, first to persuade
Alonzo to request it of his friend,
His friend to grant, then, from that very grant,
The strongest proof of friendship man can give,
To work out a cause
Of jealousy, to rack Alonzo's peace!——
I have turn'd o'er the catalogue of woes,
Which sting the heart of man, and find none equal.
It is the hydra of calamities,
The seven-fold death; the jealous are the damn'd.
Isa. Alonzo comes this way.
Zan. Most opportunely.
Withdraw. [*Exit* ISABELLA.] Ye subtle demons, which reside
In courts, and do your work with bows and smiles,
That little enginery, more mischievous
Than fleets and armies, and the cannon's murder,
Teach me to look a lie; give me your maze
Of gloomy thought and intricate design,
To catch the man I hate, and then devour.

Enter DON ALONZO.

My lord, I give you joy.
Alon. Of what, good Zanga?
Zan. Is not the lovely Leonora yours?
Alon. What will become of Carlos?
Zan. He's your friend;
And since he can't espouse the fair himself,
Will take some comfort from Alonzo's fortune.
Alon Alas, thou little know'st the force of love!
Love reigns a sultan with unrivall'd sway;
Puts all relations, friendship's self, to death,
If once he's jealous of it. I love Carlos;
Yet well I know what pangs I felt this morning
At his intended nuptials. For myself
I then felt pains, which now for him I feel.
Zan. You will not wed her then?
Alon. Not instantly.
Insult his broken heart the very moment!
Zan. I understand you: but you'll wed hereafter,
When your friend's gone, and his first pain assuaged.
Alon. Am I to blame in that?
Zan. My lord, I love
Your very errors; they are born from virtue.
Your friendship (and what nobler passion claims
The heart?) does lead you blindfold to your ruin.
Consider, wherefore did Alvarez break
Don Carlos' match, and wherefore urge Alonzo's?
'Twas the same cause, the love of wealth. To-
morrow
May see Alonzo in Don Carlos' fortune;
A higher bidder is a better friend,
And there are princes sigh for Leonora.
When your friend's gone you'll wed; why, then the
cause
Which gives you Leonora now will cease.
Carlos has lost her; should you lose her too,
Why, then you heap new torments on your friend,
By that respect which labour'd to relieve him——

'Tis well, he is disturb'd; it makes him pause.
[*Aside.*

Alon. Think'st thou, my Zanga, should I ask Don Carlos,
His goodness would consent that I should wed her?

Zan. I know it would.

Alon. But then the cruelty
To ask it, and for me to ask it of him!

Zan. Methinks you are severe upon your friend.
Who was it gave him liberty and life?

Alon. That is the very reason which forbids it.
Were I a stranger, I could freely speak;
In me it so resembles a demand,
Exacting of a debt, it shocks my nature.

Zan. My lord, you know the sad alternative.
Is Leonora worth one pang or not?
Warmly as you I wish Don Carlos well;
But I am likewise Don Alonzo's friend;
There all the difference lies between us two.
In me, my lord, you hear another self;
And, give me leave to add, a better too,
Clear'd from those errors, which, though caused by virtue,
Are such as may hereafter give you pain——
Don Lopez of Castile would not demur thus.

Alon. Perish the name! What, sacrifice the fair
To age and ugliness, because set in gold?
I'll to Don Carlos, if my heart will let me.
I have not seen him since his sore affliction;
But shunn'd it, as too terrible to bear.
How shall I bear it now? I am struck already.
[*Exit.*

Zan. Half of my work is done. I must secure
Don Carlos, ere Alonzo speak with him.
[*He gives a message to* MANUEL, *who enters; and exit* MANUEL.
Proud hated Spain, oft drench'd in Moorish blood!
Dost thou not feel a deadly foe within thee?

Shake not thy towers where'er I pass along,
Conscious of ruin, and their great destroyer?
Shake to the centre, if Alonzo's dear.
Look down, O holy prophet, see me torture
This Christian dog, this infidel, which dares
To smite thy votaries, and spurn thy law;
And yet hopes pleasure from two radiant eyes,
Which look as they were lighted up for thee!
Shall he enjoy thy paradise below?
Blast the bold thought, and curse him with her charms!
But see, the melancholy lover comes.

Enter DON CARLOS.

Car. Hope, thou hast told me lies from day to day,
For more than twenty years; vile promiser!
None here are happy but the very fool,
Or very wise; and I wasn't fool enough
To smile in vanities, and hug a shadow;
Nor have I wisdom to elaborate
An artificial happiness from pains:
Even joys are pains, because they cannot last.
How many lift the head, look gay, and smile
Against their consciences? And this we know,
Yet knowing, disbelieve, and try again
What we have tried, and struggle with conviction.
Each new experience gives the former credit;
And reverend grey threescore is but a voucher,
That thirty told us true.

Zan. My noble lord,
I mourn your fate: but are no hopes surviving?

Car. No hopes. Alvarez has a heart of steel;
'Tis fix'd—'tis past—'tis absolute despair!

Zan. You wanted not to have your heart made tender,
By your own pains, to feel a friend's distress.

Car. I understand you well. Alonzo loves;
I pity him.

Zan. I dare be sworn you do;
Yet he has other thoughts.
Car. What can'st thou mean?
Zan. Indeed he has; and fears to ask a favour
A stranger from a stranger might request;
What costs you nothing, yet is all to him:
Nay, what indeed will to your glory add,
For nothing more than wishing your friend well.
Car. I pray be plain; his happiness is mine.
Zan. He loves to death; but so reveres his friend,
He can't persuade his heart to wed the maid
Without your leave, and that he fears to ask.
In perfect tenderness I urged him to it.
Knowing the deadly sickness of his heart,
Your overflowing goodness to your friend,
Your wisdom, and despair yourself to wed her,
I wrung a promise from him he would try;
And now I come, a mutual friend to both,
Without his privacy, to let you know it,
And to prepare you kindly to receive him.
Car. Ha! if he weds, I am undone indeed;
Not Don Alvarez' self can then relieve me.
Zan. Alas, my lord, you know his heart is steel;
'Tis fix'd, 'tis past, 'tis absolute despair.
Car. O, cruel Heaven! and is it not enough
That I must never, never see her more?
Ask my consent!—Must I then give her to him?
Lead to his nuptial sheets the blushing maid?
Oh!——Leonora! never, never, never!
Zan. A storm of plagues upon him! he refuses.
[*Aside.*
Car. What, wed her?—and to-day!
Zan. To-day, or never.
To-morrow may some wealthier lover bring,
And then Alonzo is thrown out like you;
Then whom shall he condemn for his misfortune?
Carlos is an Alvarez to his love.
Car. O torment! whither shall I turn?

Zan. To peace.
Car. Which is the way?
Zan. His happiness is yours——
I dare not disbelieve you.
Car. Kill my friend!
Or worse——Alas! and can there be a worse?
A worse there is; nor can my nature bear it.
Zan. You have convinced me 'tis a dreadful task.
I find Alonzo's quitting her this morning
For Carlos' sake, in tenderness to you,
Betray'd me to believe it less severe
Than I perceive it is.
Car. Thou dost upbraid me.
Zan. No, my good lord, but since you can't comply,
'Tis my misfortune that I mention'd it;
For had I not, Alonzo would indeed
Have died as now, but not by your decree.
Car. By my decree! do I decree his death?
I do——shall I then lead her to his arms?
O, which side shall I take? Be stabbed, or—stab?
'Tis equal death! a choice of agonies!
Go, Zanga, go, defer the dreadful trial,
Though but a day; something, perchance, may happen
To soften all to friendship and to love.
Go, stop my friend, let me not see him now;
But save us from an interview of death.
Zan. My lord, I'm bound in duty to obey you—
If I not bring him, may Alonzo prosper!
[*Aside, and exit.*
Car. What is this world?—Thy school, O Misery!
Our only lesson is to learn to suffer;
And he, who knows not that, was born for nothing.
Though deep my pangs and heavy at my heart,
My comfort is, each moment takes away
A grain, at least, from the dead load that's on me,

And gives a nearer prospect of the grave.
But put it most severely——should I live——
Live long——Alas, there is no length in time!
Not in thy time, O man!—What's fourscore years?
Nay, what, indeed, the age of time itself,
Since cut from out eternity's wide round?
Yet, Leonora——she can make time long,
Its nature alter, as she alter'd mine.
While in the lustre of her charms I lay,
Whole summer suns roll'd unperceived away;
I years for days, and days for moments told,
And was surprised to hear that I grew old.
Now fate does rigidly its dues regain,
And every moment is an age of pain.

Enter ZANGA *and* DON ALONZO.—ZANGA *stops* DON CARLOS.

Zan. Is this Don Carlos? this the boasted friend?
How can you turn your back upon his sadness?
Look on him, and then leave him if you can.
Whose sorrows thus depress him? Not his own:
This moment he could wed without your leave.
Car. I cannot yield: nor can I bear his griefs.
Alonzo! [*Going to him, and taking his Hand.*
Alon. O, Carlos!
Car. Pray, forbear.
Alon. Art thou undone, and shall Alonzo smile?
Alonzo, who, perhaps, in some degree
Contributed to cause thy dreadful fate?
I was deputed guardian of thy love;
But, O, I loved myself! Pour down afflictions
On this devoted head; make me your mark;
And be the world, by my example, taught
How sacred it should hold the name of friend.
Car. You charge yourself unjustly;
The crime was mine,
Who placed thee there, where only thou couldst fail.
Alon. You cast in shades the failure of a friend,

And soften all; but think not you deceive me;
I know my guilt, and I implore your pardon,
As the sole glimpse I can obtain of peace.

Car. Pardon for him who but this morning threw
Fair Leonora from his heart, all bathed
In ceaseless tears, and blushing for her love!
Yes, 'twas in thee, through fondness for thy friend,
To shut thy bosom against ecstacies;
For which, while this pulse beats, it beats to thee;
While this blood flows, it flows for my Alonzo,
And every wish is levell'd at thy joy.

Zan. [*To* ALONZO.] My lord, my lord, this is your time to speak.

Alon. [*To* ZANGA.] Because he's kind? It therefore is the worst;
Do I not see him quite possess'd with anguish,
And shall I pour in new? No, fond desire!
No, love! one pang at parting, and farewell.
I have no other love but Carlos now.
[*Runs to* CARLOS.

Car. Alas! my friend, why with such eager grasp
Dost press my hand?

Alon. If, after death, our forms
Shall be transparent, naked every thought,
And friends meet friends, and read each other's hearts,
Thou'lt know one day, that thou wast held most dear.
Farewell.

Car. Alonzo, stay—he cannot speak—[*Holds him.*
Lest it should grieve me—Shall I be outdone,
And lose in glory, as I lose in love? [*Aside.*
I take it much unkindly, my Alonzo,
You think so meanly of me, not to speak,
When well I know your heart is near to bursting.
Have you forgot how you have bound me to you?
Your smallest friendship's liberty and life.

Alon. There, there it is, my friend, it cuts me there.

How dreadful is it to a generous mind
To ask, when sure he cannot be denied!
Car. How greatly thought! In all he towers above me. [*Aside.*
Then you confess you would ask something of me?
Alon. No, on my soul.
Zan. [*To* ALONZO.] Then lose her.
Car. Glorious spirit!
Why, what a pang has he run through for this!
By Heaven, I envy him his agonies.
Why was not mine the most illustrious lot,
Of starting at one action from below,
And flaming up into consummate greatness?
Ha! angels strengthen me!—It shall be so——
My Alonzo!
Since thy great soul disdains to make request,
Receive with favour that I make to thee.
Alon. What means my Carlos?
Car. Pray, observe me well.
Fate and Alvarez tore her from my heart,
And, plucking up my love, they had well nigh
Pluck'd my life too, for they were twined together.
Of that no more—What now does reason bid?
I cannot wed—Farewell my happiness!
But, O my soul, with care provide for hers!
In life how weak, how helpless is woman!
So properly the object of affliction,
That Heaven is pleased to make distress become her,
And dresses her most amiably in tears.
Take then my heart in dowry with the fair,
Be thou her guardian and thou must be mine;
Shut out the thousand pressing ills of life
With thy surrounding arms—Do this, and then
Set down the liberty and life thou gavest me,
As little things, as essays of thy goodness,
And rudiments of friendship so divine.
Alon. There is a grandeur in thy goodness to me,

Which, with thy foes, would render thee adored.
And canst thou, canst thou part with Leonora?
Car. I do not part with her, I give her thee.
Alon. Carlos!—
But think not words were ever made
For such occasions. Silence, tears, embraces,
Are languid eloquence: I'll seek relief
In absence, from the pain of so much goodness,
There thank the blest above, thy sole superiors,
Adore, and raise my thoughts of them by thee.
[*Exit.*

Zan. Thus far success has crown'd my boldest hope.
My next care is to hasten these new nuptials,
And then my master-works begin to play.
[*Aside, and exit.*

Car. Too soon thou praisest me. He's gone, and now
I must unsluice my overburden'd heart,
And let it flow. I would not grieve my friend
With tears; nor interrupt my great design;
Great sure as ever human breast durst think of.
But now my sorrows, long with pain suppress'd,
Burst their confinement with impetuous sway,
O'erswell all bounds, and bear e'en life away:
So, till the day was won, the Greek renown'd,
With anguish wore the arrow in his wound,
Then drew the shaft from out his tortured side,
Let gush the torrent of his blood, and died.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

Another Apartment in the Palace.

Enter ZANGA *and* ISABELLA.

Zan. O Joy, thou welcome stranger! twice three years
I have not felt thy vital beam; but now
It warms my veins, and plays around my heart.
My Isabella!
Isa. What commands my Moor?
Zan. My fair ally, my lovely minister!
'Twas well Alvarez, by my arts impell'd,
(To plunge Don Carlos in the last despair,
And so prevent all future molestation)
Finish'd the nuptials soon as he resolved them;
This conduct ripen'd all for me, and ruin.
Scarce had the priest the holy rite perform'd,
When I, by sacred inspiration, forged
That letter, which I trusted to thy hand;
That letter, which in glowing terms conveys,
From happy Carlos to fair Leonora,
The most profound acknowledgment of heart,
For wond'rous transports, which he never knew.
This is a good subservient artifice,
To aid the nobler workings of my brain.
Isa. I quickly dropp'd it in the bride's apartment,
As you commanded.

Zan. With a lucky hand;
For soon Alonzo found it; I observed him
From out my secret stand. He took it up;
But scarce was it unfolded to his sight,
When he, as if an arrow pierced his eye,
Started, and trembling dropp'd it on the ground.
Pale and aghast a while my victim stood,
Disguised a sigh or two, and puff'd them from him;
Then rubb'd his brow, and took it up again.
At first he look'd as if he meant to read it;
But, check'd by rising fears, he crush'd it thus,
And thrust it, like an adder, in his bosom.

Isa. But if he read it not, it cannot sting him,
At least not mortally.

Zan. At first I thought so;
But farther thought informs me otherwise,
And turns this disappointment to account.
He more shall credit it, because unseen,
(If 'tis unseen) as thou anon may'st find.

Isa. That would indeed commend my Zanga's skill.

Zan. This, Isabella, is Don Carlos' picture;
Take it, and so dispose of it, that, found,
It may rise up a witness of her love;
Under her pillow, in her cabinet,
Or elsewhere, as shall best promote our end.

Isa. I'll weigh it as its consequence requires,
Then do my utmost to deserve your smile. [*Exit.*

Zan. Is that Alonzo prostrate on the ground?——
Now he starts up like flame from sleeping embers,
And wild distraction glares from either eye.
If thus a slight surmise can work his soul,
How will the fulness of the tempest tear him!

Enter Don Alonzo.

Alon. And yet it cannot be——I am deceived——
I injure her: she wears the face of Heaven.

Zan. He doubts. [*Aside.*

Alon. I dare not look on this again.
If the first glance, which gave suspicion only,
Had such effect, so smote my heart and brain,
The certainty would dash me all in pieces.
It cannot——Ha! it must, it must be true. [*Starts.*
Zan. Hold there, and we succeed.—He has descried me.
I'll seem to go, to make my stay more sure. [*Aside.*
Alon. Hold, Zanga, turn.
Zan. My lord!
Alon. Shut close the doors,
That not a spirit find an entrance here.
Zan. My lord's obey'd.
Alon. I see that thou art frighted.
If thou dost love me, I shall fill thy heart
With scorpions' stings.
Zan. If I do love, my lord?
Alon. Come near me, let me rest upon thy bosom
(What pillow like the bosom of a friend?)
For I am sick at heart.
Zan. Speak, sir, O speak,
And take me from the rack.
Alon. I am most happy: mine is victory,
Mine the king's favour, mine the nation's shout,
And great men make their fortunes of my smiles.
O curse of curses! in the lap of blessing
To be most curst!——My Leonora's false!
Zan. Save me, my lord!
Alon. My Leonora's false! [*Gives him the Letter.*
Zan. Then Heaven has lost its image here on earth.
[*While* ZANGA *reads the Letter, he trembles, and shows the utmost Concern.*
Alon. Good-natured man! he makes my pains his own.
I durst not read it; but I read it now
In thy concern.
Zan. Did you not read it then?

Alon. Mine eye just touch'd it, and could bear no more.

Zan. Thus perish all that gives Alonzo pain! [*Tears the Letter.*

Alon. Why didst thou tear it?

Zan. Think of it no more.
'Twas your mistake, and groundless are your fears.

Alon. And didst thou tremble then for my mistake?
Or give the whole contents, or, by the pangs
That feed upon my heart, thy life's in danger. [*Draws.*

Zan. Is this Alonzo's language to his Zanga?
Draw forth your sword, and find the secret here.
For whose sake is it, think you, I conceal it?
Wherefore this rage? Because I seek your peace?
I have no interest in suppressing it,
But what good-natured tenderness for you
Obliges me to have. Not mine the heart
That will be rent in two. Not mine the fame
That will be damn'd, though all the world should know it.

Alon. Then my worst fears are true, and life is past.

Zan. What has the rashness of my passion utter'd?
I know not what——but grant I did confess,
What is a letter? letters may be forged.
For Heaven's sweet sake, my lord, lift up your heart.
Some foe to your repose——

Alon. So Heaven look on me,
As I can't find the man I have offended.

Zan. Indeed! [*Aside.*]——Our innocence is not our shield:
They take offence, who have not been offended;
They seek our ruin too, who speak us fair,
And death is often ambush'd in their smiles.
We know not whom we have to fear. 'Tis certain
A letter may be forged, and, in a point
Of such a dreadful consequence as this,
One would rely on nought that might be false——

Think, have you any other cause to doubt her?
Away, you can find none. Resume your spirit:
All's well again.
Alon. O that it were!
Zan. It is;
For who would credit that, which credited,
Makes hell superfluous by superior pains,
Without such proofs as cannot be withstood?
Has she not ever been to virtue train'd?
Is not her fame as spotless as the sun,
Her sex's envy, and the boast of Spain?
Alon. O, Zanga! it is that confounds me most,
That full in opposition to appearance——
Zan. No more, my lord, for you condemn yourself.
What is absurdity, but to believe
Against appearance?——You can't yet, I find,
Subdue your passion to your better sense;——
And, truth to tell, it does not much displease me.
'Tis fit our indiscretions should be check'd
With some degree of pain.
Alon. What indiscretion?
Zan. Come, you must bear to hear your fau'ts from me.
Had you not sent Don Carlos to the court
The night before the battle, that foul slave,
Who forged the senseless scroll which gives you pain,
Had wanted footing for his villainy.
Alon. I sent him not.
Zan. Not send him!—Ha!—That strikes me.
I thought he came on message to the king.
Is there another cause could justify
His shunning danger, and the promised fight?
But I perhaps may think too rigidly;
So long in absence, and impatient love,——
Alon. In my confusion, that had quite escaped me.
'Tis clear as day—for Carlos is so brave,
He lives not but on fame, he hunts for danger,

And is enamour'd of the face of death.
How then could he decline the next day's battle,
But for the transports——Oh, it must be so!——
Inhuman! by the loss of his own honour,
To buy the ruin of his friend!

Zan. You wrong him;
He knew not of your love.

Alon. Ha!——

Zan. That stings home. [*Aside.*

Alon. Indeed, he knew not of my treacherous love——
Proofs rise on proofs, and still the last the strongest.
Th' eternal law of things declares it true,
Which calls for judgment on distinguish'd guilt,
And loves to make our crime our punishment.
Love is my torture, love was first my crime;
For she was his, my friend's, and he (O horror!)
Confided all in me. O, sacred faith!
How dearly I abide thy violation!

Zan. Were then their loves far gone?

Alon. The father's will
There bore a total sway; and he, as soon
As news arrived that Carlos' fleet was seen
From off our coast, fired with the love of gold,
Determined, that the very sun which saw
Carlos' return, should see his daughter wed.

Zan. Indeed, my lord? then you must pardon me,
If I presume to mitigate the crime.
Consider, strong allurements soften guilt;
Long was his absence, ardent was his love,
At midnight his return, the next day destined
For his espousals—'twas a strong temptation.

Alon. Temptation!

Zan. 'Twas but gaining of one night!

Alon. One night!

Zan. That crime could ne'er return again.

Alon. Again! By Heaven thou dost insult thy lord.

Temptation! One night gain'd! O stings and death!
And am I then undone? Alas, my Zanga!
And dost thou own it too? Deny it still,
And rescue me one moment from distraction.
Zan. My lord, I hope the best.
Alon. False, foolish hope,
And insolent to me! thou know'st it false;
It is as glaring as the noontide sun.
Devil!—This morning, after three years coldness,
To rush at once into a passion for me!
'Twas time to feign, 'twas time to get another,
When her first fool was sated with her beauties.
Zan. What says my lord? Did Leonora then
Never before disclose her passion for you?
Alon. Never.
Zan. Throughout the whole three years?
Alon. O never! never!
Why, Zanga, shouldst thou strive? 'Tis all in vain:
Though thy soul labours, it can find no reed
For hope to catch at. Ah! I'm plunging down
Ten thousand thousand fathoms in despair.
Zan. Hold, sir, I'll break your fall—Waive ev'ry fear,
And be a man again—Had he enjoy'd her,
Be most assured, he had resign'd her to you
With less reluctance.
Alon. Ha! Resign her to me!——
Resign her!—Who resign'd her?—Double death!
How could I doubt so long? My heart is broke.
First love her to distraction! then resign her!
Zan. But was it not with utmost agony?
Alon. Grant that, he still resign'd her; that's enough.
Would he pluck out his eye to give it me?
Tear out his heart?——She was his heart no more—
Nor was it with reluctance he resign'd her;
By Heav'n, he ask'd, he courted me to wed.

I thought it strange; 'tis now no longer so.
Zan. Was't his request? Are you right sure of that?
I fear the letter was not all a tale.
Alon. A tale! Here's proof equivalent to sight.
Zan. I should distrust my sight on this occasion.
Alon. And so should I; by Heaven, I think I should.
What! Leonora, the divine, by whom
We guess'd at angels! Oh! I'm all confusion!
Zan. You now are too much ruffled to think clearly.
Since bliss and horror, life and death hang on it,
Go to your chamber, there maturely weigh
Each circumstance; consider, above all,
That it is jealousy's peculiar nature
To swell small things to great; nay, out of nought
To conjure much, and then to lose its reason
Amid the hideous phantoms it has form'd.
Alon. Had I ten thousand lives, I'd give them all
To be deceived. I fear 'tis doomsday with me.
And yet she seem'd so pure, that I thought Heaven
Borrow'd her form for Virtue's self to wear,
To gain her lovers with the sons of men.
O Leonora! Leonora! [*Exit.*

Enter ISABELLA.

Zan. Thus far it works auspiciously. My patient
Thrives underneath my hand in misery.
He's gone to think; that is, to be distracted.
Isa. I overheard your conference, and saw you,
To my amazement, tear the letter.
Zan. There,
There, Isabella, I outdid myself.
For, tearing it, I not secure it only
In its first force, but superadd a new.
For after tearing it, as loth to show

The foul contents, if I should swear it now
A forgery, my lord would disbelieve me,
Nay, more, would disbelieve the more I swore.
But is the picture happily disposed of?

Isa. It is.

Zan. That's well! [*Exit* ISABELLA.] Ah! what is well? O pang to think!
O dire necessity! is this my province?
Whither, my soul! ah! whither art thou sunk
Beneath thy sphere?
Does this become a soldier? This become
Whom armies follow'd, and a people loved?
My martial glory withers at the thought.
But great my end; and since there are no other,
These means are just, they shine with borrow'd light,
Illustrious from the purpose they pursue.

And greater sure my merit, who, to gain
A point sublime, can such a task sustain:
To wade through ways obscene, my honour bend,
And shock my nature, to attain my end.
Late time shall wonder; that my joys will raise,
For wonder is involuntary praise. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

Another Apartment in the Palace.

Enter DON ALONZO *and* ZANGA.

Alon. Oh, what a pain to think! when every thought,
Perplexing thought, in intricacies runs,
And reason knits th' inextricable toil,
In which herself is taken!
No more I'll bear this battle of the mind,
This inward anarchy; but find my wife,
And to her trembling heart presenting death,
Force all the secret from her.
Zan. O, forbear!
You totter on the very brink of ruin.
Alon. What dost thou mean?
Zan. That will discover all,
And kill my hopes. What can I think or do?
[*Aside.*
Alon. What dost thou murmur?
Zan. Force the secret from her?
What's perjury to such a crime as this?
Will she confess it then? O, groundless hope
But rest assured, she'll make this accusation,
Or false or true, your ruin with the king;
Such is her father's power.

Alon. No more, I care not;
Rather than groan beneath this load, I'll die.
Zan. But for what better will you change this load?
Grant you should know it, would not that be worse?
Alon. No, it would cure me of my mortal pangs:
By hatred and contempt I should despise her,
And all my love-bred agonies would vanish.
Zan. Ah! were I sure of that, my lord——
Alon. What then?
Zan. You should not hazard life to gain the secret.
Alon. What dost thou mean? Thou know'st I'm on the rack.
I'll not be play'd with; speak, if thou hast aught,
Or I this instant fly to Leonora.
Zan. That is, to death. My lord, I am not yet
Quite so far gone in guilt to suffer it,
Tho' gone too far, Heaven knows—'Tis I am guilty—
I have ta'en pains, as you, I know, observed,
To hinder you from diving in the secret,
And turn'd aside your thoughts from the detection.
Alon. Thou dost confound me,
Zan. I confound myself,
And frankly own it, though to my shame I own it!
Nought but your life in danger could have torn
The secret out, and made me own my crime.
Alon. Speak quickly; Zanga, speak.
Zan. Not yet, dread sir:
First, I must be convinced, that, if you find
The fair one guilty, scorn, as you assured me,
Shall conquer love and rage, and heal your soul.
Alon. O 'twill, by Heaven.
Zan. Alas! I fear it much,
And scarce can hope so far; but I of this
Exact your solemn oath, that you'll abstain
From all self-violence, and save my lord.
Alon. I trebly swear.

Zan. You'll bear it like a man?
Alon. A god.
Zan. Such have you been to me, these tears confess it,
And pour'd forth miracles of kindness on me:
And what amends is now within my power,
But to confess, expose myself to justice,
And as a blessing claim my punishment.
Know then, Don Carlos——
Alon. Oh!
Zan. You cannot bear it.
Alon. Go on, I'll have it, though it blast mankind;
I'll have it all, and instantly. Go on.
Zan. Don Carlos did return at dead of night——

Enter LEONORA.

Leon. My Lord Alonzo, you are absent from us,
And quite undo our joy.
Alon. I'll come, my love:
Be not our friends deserted by us both;
I'll follow you this moment.
Leon. My good lord,
I do observe severity of thought
Upon your brow. Aught hear you from the Moors?
Alon. No, my delight.
Leon. What then employ'd your mind?
Alon. Thou, love, and only thou; so Heaven befriend me,
As other thought can find no entrance here.
Leon. How good in you, my lord, whom nations' cares
Solicit, and a world in arms obeys,
To drop one thought on me!
[*He shows the utmost impatience.*
Alon. Know then, to thy comfort,
Thou hast me all, my throbbing heart is full
With thee alone, I've thought of nothing else;

Nor shall, I from my soul believe, till death.
My life, our friends expect thee.
Leon. I obey. [*Exit.*
Alon. Is that the face of cursed hypocrisy?
If she is guilty, stars are made of darkness,
And beauty shall no more belong to Heaven.——
Don Carlos did return at dead of night——
Proceed, good Zanga, so thy tale began.
Zan. Don Carlos did return at dead of night;
That night, by chance (ill chance for me) did I
Command the watch that guards the palace gate.
He told me he had letters for the king,
Dispatch'd from you.
Alon. The villain lied!
Zan. My lord,
I pray, forbear——Transported at his sight,
After so long a bondage, and your friend,
(Who could suspect him of an artifice?)
No farther I enquired, but let him pass,
False to my trust, at least imprudent in it.
Our watch relieved, I went into the garden,
As is my custom when the night's serene,
And took a moon-light walk; when soon I heard
A rustling in an arbour that was near me.
I saw two lovers in each other's arms,
Embracing and embraced. Anon the man
Arose, and, falling back some paces from her,
Gazed ardently awhile, then rush'd at once,
And throwing all himself into her bosom,
There softly sighed, "O, night of ecstacy!
When shall we meet again?"—Don Carlos then
Led Leonora forth.
Alon. Oh! O, my heart! [*He sinks into a chair.*
Zan. Groan on, and with the sound refresh my soul!
'Tis through his brain, his eyeballs roll in anguish.
[*Aside.*
My lord, my lord, why will you rack me thus?

Speak to me, let me know that you still live.
I'm your own Zanga,
So loved, so cherish'd, and so faithful to you.——
Rise, sir, for honour's sake. Why should the Moors,
Why should the vanquish'd triumph?
Alon. Oh, she was all!——
My fame, my friendship, and my love of arms,
All stoop'd to her, my blood was her possession.
Deep in the secret foldings of my heart
She lived with life, and far the dearer she.
To think on't is the torment of the damn'd;
And not to think on't is impossible.
How fair the cheek, that first alarm'd my soul!
How bright the eye that set it in a flame!
How soft the breast, on which I laid my peace
For years to slumber, unawaked by care!
How fierce the transport! how sublime the bliss!
How deep, how black, the horror and despair!
Zan. You said you'd bear it like a man.
Alon. I do.
Am I not most distracted?
Zan. Pray, be calm.
Alon. As hurricanes:—be thou assured of that.
Zan. Is this the wise Alonzo?
Alon. Villain, no!
He died in the arbour—he was murder'd there!
I am his demon though——My wife!—my wife!—
Zan. He weeps,—he weeps! [*Aside.*
Alon. O villain, villain, most accursed!
If thou didst know it, why didst let me wed?
Zan. Hear me, my lord, your anger will abate.
I knew it not:—I saw them in the garden;
But saw no more than you might well expect
To see in lovers destined for each other.
Who could suspect fair Leonora's virtue,
Till after-proofs conspired to blacken it?
Sad proofs, which came too late, which broke not out,

(Eternal curses on Alvarez' haste!)
Till holy rites had made the wanton yours;
And then, I own, I labour'd to conceal it,
In duty, and compassion to your peace.
Alon. Live now, be damn'd hereafter—for I want thee.
" O, night of ecstacy!"—Ha! was't not so?
I will enjoy this murder.—Let me think——
The jasmine bower—'tis secret and remote;
Go wait me there, and take thy dagger with thee.
[*Exit* ZANGA.
How the sweet sound still sings within my ear!
" When shall we meet again?"——To-night, in hell.

Enter LEONORA.

Ha! I'm surprised! I stagger at her charms!
Leon. My lord, excuse me; see, a second time
I come in embassy from all your friends,
Whose joys are languid, uninspired by you.
Alon. This moment, Leonora, I was coming
To thee, and all——but sure, or I mistake,
Or thou canst well inspire my friends with joy. Oh!
Leon. Why sighs my lord?
Alon. I sigh'd not, Leonora.
Leon. I thought you did; your sighs are mine, my lord,
And I shall feel them all.
Alon. Dost flatter me?
Leon. If my regards for you are flattery,
Full far, indeed, I stretch'd the compliment
In this day's solemn rite.
Alon. What rite?
Leon. You sport me.
Alon. Indeed I do; my heart is full of mirth.
Leon. And so is mine——I look on cheerfulness,
As on the health of virtue.
Alon. Virtue!——Damn——
Leon. What says my lord?

Alon. Thou art exceeding fair.

Leon. Beauty alone is but of little worth;
But when the soul and body of a piece
Both shine alike, then they obtain a price,
And are a fit reward for gallant actions,
Heaven's pay on earth for such great souls as yours;—
If fair and innocent, I am your due.

Alon. Innocent! [*Aside.*

Leon How—My lord, I interrupt you.

Alon. No, my best life, I must not part with thee;
This hand is mine——O, what a hand is here!
So soft, souls sink into it, and are lost!

Leon In tears, my lord?

Alon. What less can speak my joy!
Why, I could gaze upon thy looks for ever,
And drink in all my being from thine eyes:
And I could snatch a flaming thunderbolt,
And hurl destruction——

Leon. My lord, you fright me.
Is this the fondness of your nuptial hour?
Why, when I woo your hand, is it denied me?
Your very eyes, why are they taught to shun me?
Acquaint me with the secret of your heart,
That heart which I have purchased with my own!
Lay it before me then; it is my due.
Unkind Alonzo! though I might demand it,
Behold I kneel! See, Leonora kneels!
The bride foregoes the homage of her day,
And deigns to be a beggar for her own!
[*Takes his Hand.*
Speak then, I charge you speak, or I expire,
And load you with my death. My lord—my lord!

Alon. Ha! ha! ha!

[*He breaks from her, and she sinks upon the Floor.*

Leon. Are these the joys which fondly I conceived?
And is it thus a wedded life begins?

What did I part with, when I gave my heart?
The maid, that loves,
Goes out to sea upon a shatter'd plank,
And puts her trust in miracles for safety. [*Rises.*
Where shall I sigh?—where pour out my complaints?
He that should hear, should succour, should redress,
He is the source of all.

Alon. Go to thy chamber;
I soon will follow; that, which now disturbs thee,
Shall be cleared up, and thou shalt not condemn me.
[*Exit* LEON.
O, how like innocence she looks!—What, stab her!
And rush into her blood!——I never can!
Mine is the guilt—mine—to supplant my friend.—
How then? Why thus——no more; it is determined.

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. I fear his heart has fail'd him. She must die.
Can I not rouse the snake that's in his bosom,
To sting our human nature, and effect it? [*Aside.*

Alon. This vast and solid earth, that blazing sun,
Those skies, through which it rolls, must all have end.
What then is man? the smallest part of nothing.
Day buries day, month month, and year the year,
Our life is but a chain of many deaths;
Can then death's self be fear'd? our life much rather.
Life is the desert, life the solitude,
Death joins us to the great majority:
'Tis to be borne to Platos, and to Cæsars;
'Tis to be great for ever:
'Tis pleasure, 'tis ambition then to die.

Zan. I think, my lord, you talk'd of death.

Alon. I did.

Zan. I give you joy, then Leonora's dead.

Alon. No, Zanga, the greatest guilt is mine,
Who might have mark'd his tameness to resign her
Who might have mark'd her sudden turn of love:

These, and a thousand tokens more; and yet,—
For which the saints absolve my soul,—did wed!
Zan. Whither tends this?
Alon. To shed a woman's blood
Would stain my sword, and make my wars inglorious;
But just resentment to myself, bears in it
A stamp of greatness above vulgar minds.
He, who, superior to the checks of nature,
Dares make his life the victim of his reason,
Does in some sort that reason deify,
And take a flight at heaven.
Zan. Alas, my lord,
'Tis not your reason, but her beauty finds
Those arguments, and throws you on your sword.
You cannot close an eye, that is so bright,
You cannot strike a breast, that is so soft,
That has ten thousand ecstacies in store
For Carlos——No, my lord, I mean for you.
Alon. O, through my heart and marrow! Pr'ythee spare me:
Nor more upbraid the weakness of thy lord.
I own, I tried, I quarrell'd with my heart,
And push'd it on, and bid it give her death;
But, oh, her eyes struck first, and murder'd me.
Zan. I know not what to answer to my lord.
Men are but men.
Farewell, then, my best lord, since you must die!
Oh, that I were to share your monument,
And in eternal darkness close these eyes,
Against those scenes, which I am doom'd to suffer!
Alon. What dost thou mean?
Zan. And is it then unknown?
Oh, grief of heart, to think that you should ask it!
Sure you distrust that ardent love I bear you,
Else could you doubt, when you are laid in dust——
But it will cut my poor heart through and through,
To see those revel on your sacred tomb,

Who brought you thither by their lawless loves.
For there they'll revel, and exult to find
Him sleep so fast, who else might mar their joys.
Alon. Distraction!——But, Don Carlos, well thou know'st,
Is sheathed in steel, and bent on other thoughts.
Zan. Yes, till the fever of his blood returns,
While her last kiss still glows upon his cheek.
But when he finds Alonzo is no more,
How will he rush like lightning to her arms!
There sigh, there languish, there pour out his soul;
But not in grief——sad obsequies to thee!——
But thou wilt be at peace, nor see, nor hear
The burning kiss, the sigh of ecstacy,
Their throbbing hearts that jostle one another:
Thank Heaven, these torments will be all my own.
Alon. I'll ease thee of that pain. Let Carlos die,
O'ertake him on the road, and see it done.
'Tis my command. [*Gives his Signet.*
Zan. I dare not disobey.
Alon. My Zanga, now I have thy leave to die.
Zan. Ah, sir! think, think again. Are all men buried
In Carlos' grave? You know not womankind.
When once the throbbing of the heart has broke
The modest zone, with which it was first tied,
Each man she meets will be a Carlos to her.
Alon. That thought has more of hell than had the former;
Another, and another, and another!
And each shall cast a smile upon my tomb.
I am convinced; I must not, will not die.
Zan. You cannot die; nor can you murder her.
What then remains? In nature no third way,
But to forget, and so to love again.
Alon. Oh!
Zan. If you forgive, the world will call you good;
If you forget, the world will call you wise;

If you receive her to your grace again,
The world will call you very, very kind.
Alon. Zanga, I understand thee well. She dies;
Though my arm trembles at the stroke, she dies.
Zan. That's truly great. What think you 'twas set up
The Greek and Roman name in such a lustre,
But doing right, in stern despite to Nature,
Shutting their ears to all her little cries,
When great, august, and godlike justice call'd?
At Aulis, one pour'd out a daughter's life,
And gain'd more glory than by all his wars;
Another slew a sister in just rage;
A third, the theme of all succeeding times,
Gave to the cruel axe a darling son.
Nay more, for justice some devote themselves,
As he at Carthage, an immortal name!
Yet there is one step left above them all,
Above their history, above their fable,
A wife, bride, mistress, unenjoy'd——do that,
And tread upon the Greek and Roman glory.
Alon. 'Tis done!—Again new transports fire my brain:
I had forgot it, 'tis my bridal night.
Friend, give me joy, we must be gay together;
See that the festival be duly honour'd.

And when with garlands the full bowl is crown'd,
And music gives the elevating sound,
And golden carpets spread the sacred floor,
And a new day the blazing tapers pour,
Thou, Zanga, thou my solemn friends invite,
From the dark realms of everlasting night;
Call Vengeance, call the Furies, call Despair,
And Death, our chief-invited guest, be there;
He, with pale hand, shall lead the bride, and spread
Eternal curtains round her nuptial bed. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

Another Apartment in the Palace

Enter ZANGA *and* ALONZO.

Alon. Is Carlos murder'd ?
Zan. I obey'd your order.
Six ruffians overtook him on the road :
He fought as he was won't, and four he slew.
Then sunk beneath ar hundred wounds to death.
His last breath blest Alonzo, and desired
His bones might rest near yours.
Alon. O Zanga, Zanga !
But I'll not think :
It is a day of darkness,
Of contradictions, and of many deaths.
Where's Leonora then ? Quick, answer me;
I'm deep in horrors, I'll be deeper still.
I find thy artifice did take effect,
And she forgives my late deportment to her.
Zan. I told her, from your childhood you were wont,
On any great surprise, but chiefly then,

When cause of sorrow bore it company,
To have your passion shake the seat of reason;
A momentary ill, which soon blew o'er.
Then did I tell her of Don Carlos' death,
(Wisely suppressing by what means he fell)
And laid the blame on that. At first she doubted;
But such the honest artifice I used,
That she, at length, was fully satisfied.
But what design you, sir, and how?

Alon. I'll tell thee.
Thus I've ordain'd it. In the jasmine bower,
The place which she dishonour'd with her guilt,
There will I meet her; the appointment's made;
And calmly spread (for I can do it now)
The blackness of her crime before her sight,
And then with all the cool solemnity
Of public justice, give her to the grave. [*Exit.*

Zan. Why get thee gone! horror and night go with thee.
Sisters of Acheron, go hand in hand;
Go dance around the bower, and close them in;
And tell them, that I sent you to salute them.
Profane the ground, and for the ambrosial rose,
And breath of jasmine, let hemlock blacken,
And deadly nightshade poison all the air.
For the sweet nightingale may ravens croak,
Toads pant, and adders rustle through the leaves;
May serpents, winding up the trees, let fall
Their hissing necks upon them from above,
And mingle kisses—such as I should give them!
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Bower.—LEONORA *sleeping.*

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. Ye amaranths! ye roses, like the morn!
Sweet myrtles, and ye golden orange groves!
Are ye not blasted as I enter in;
Joy-giving, love-inspiring, holy bower!
Know, in thy fragrant bosom thou receivest
A murderer!——[*He advances.*] Ha! she sleeps—
The day's uncommon heat has overcome her.
Then take, my longing eyes, your last full gaze.
Oh, what a sight is here! how dreadful fair!
Who would not think that being innocent?
Oh, my distracted heart!—Oh, cruel Heaven!
To give such charms as these, and then call man,
Mere man, to be your executioner!
But see, she smiles! I never shall smile more.
It strongly tempts me to a parting kiss.
[*Going, he starts back.*
Ha! smile again? She dreams of him she loves.
Curse on her charms! I'll stab her through them all.
[*As he is going to strike, she wakes.*

Leon. My lord, your stay was long, and yonder lull
Of falling waters tempted me to rest,
Dispirited with noon's excessive heat.

Alon. Ye powers! with what an eye she mends the day!
While they were closed I should have given the blow.
[*Aside.*

Leon. What says my lord?

Alon. Why, this Alonzo says;

If love were endless, men were gods; 'tis that
Does counterbalance travel, danger, pain——
'Tis Heaven's expedient to make mortals bear
The light, and cheat them of the peaceful grave.

Leon. Alas, my lord! why talk you of the grave?
Your friend is dead: in friendship you sustain
A mighty loss; repair it with my love.

Alon. Thy love, thou piece of witchcraft! I would say,
Thou brightest angel! I could gaze for ever.
Where hadst thou this? enchantress, tell me where,
Which with a touch works miracles, boils up
My blood to tumults, and turns round my brain?
But, Oh, those eyes! those murderers! Oh, whence,
Whence didst thou steal their burning orbs? From heaven?
Thou didst: and 'tis religion to adore them.

Leon. My best Alonzo, moderate your thoughts.
Extremes still fright me, though of love itself.

Alon. Extremes indeed! it hurried me away;
But I come home again—and now for justice——
And now for death——It is impossible——
[*Draws his Dagger.*
I leave her to just Heaven.
[*Drops the Dagger, and exit.*

Leon. Ha! a dagger!

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. Wither his hand, that held the steel in vain!
That dagger found will cause her to enquire,—
What can be done? That's something still. If not,
'Tis all I can; it shall be so. [*Aside.*

Leon. O, Zanga, I am sinking in my fears!
Alonzo dropp'd this dagger as he left me,
And left me in a strange disorder too.
What can this mean? Angels preserve his life!

Zan. Yours, madam, yours.

Leon. What, Zanga, dost thou say?

Zan. Carry you goodness, then, to such extremes,
So blinded to the faults of him you love,
That you perceive not he is jealous?
Leon. Heav'ns!
And yet a thousand things recur that swear it.
Jealous! it sickens at my heart. Unkind,
Ungen'rous, groundless, weak, and insolent!
Why? wherefore? on what shadow of occasion
O how the great man lessens to my thought!
How could so mean a vice as jealousy
Live in a throng of such exalted virtues?
I scorn, and hate; yet love him, and adore.
I cannot, will not, dare not, think it true,
Till from himself I know it. [*Exit.*
Zan. This succeeds
Just to my wish. Now she with violence
Upbraids him; he, not doubting she is guilty,
Rages no less; and if on either side
The waves run high, there still lives hope of ruin.

Enter ALONZO.

My lord——
Alon. O Zanga, hold thy peace! I am no coward,
But Heaven itself did hold my hand; I felt it,
By the well-being of my soul, I did.
I'll think of vengeance at another season.
Zan. My lord, her guilt——
Alon. Perdition on thee, Moor,
For that one word!
I love her to distraction.
If 'tis my shame, why be it so——I love her;
Nor can I help it; 'tis imposed upon me
By some superior and resistless power.
I could not hurt her to be lord of earth;
It shocks my nature like a stroke from Heaven.
But see, my Leonora comes—Begone.
[*Exit* ZANGA.

Enter LEONORA.

O seen for ever, yet for ever new!
The conquer'd thou dost conquer o'er again,
Inflicting wound on wound.
Leon. Alas, my lord!
What need of this to me?
Alon. Ha! dost thou weep?
Leon. Have I no cause?
Alon. If love is thy concern,
Thou hast no cause: none ever loved like me.
Oh, that this one embrace would last for ever!
Leon. These tears declare how much I taste the joy
Of being folded in your arms and heart;
My universe does lie within that space.
This dagger bore false witness.
Alon. Ha, my dagger!
It rouses horrid images. Away,
Away with it; and let us talk of love.
Leon. It touches you.
Alon. Let's talk of love.
Leon. Of death!
Alon. As thou lovest happiness——
Leon. Of murder!
Alon. Then must I fly for thy sake and my own.
Leon. Nay, by my injuries, you first must hear me.
Alon. Yet, yet dismiss me; I am all in flames.
Leon. Who has most cause, you or myself? What act
Of my whole life encouraged you to this?
Or of your own, what guilt has drawn it on you?
You find me kind, and think me kind to all;
The weak, ungenerous error of your sex.
He, that can stoop to harbour such a thought,
Deserves to find it true.
Alon. Oh, sex, sex, sex!
The language of you all. Ill-fated woman!

Why wilt thou force me back into the gulf
Of agonies I had block'd up from thought?
But since thou hast replunged me in my torture,
I will be satisfy'd.—Confess, confess,—
Where did I find this picture?

Leon. Ha, Don Carlos!
By my best hopes, more welcome than thy own.

Alon. I know it; but is vice so very rank,
That thou shouldst dare to dash it in my face?
Nature is sick of thee, abandon'd woman!

Leon. Repent.

Alon. Is that for me?

Leon. Fall, ask my pardon.

Alon. Astonishment!

Leon. Darest thou persist to think I am dishonest?

Alon. I know thee so.

Leon. This blow, then, to thy heart——

[*She stabs herself, he endeavouring to prevent her.*

Alon. Hoa, Zanga! Isabella! hoa! she bleeds!
Descend, ye blessed angels, to assist her!

Leon. This the only way I would wound thee,
Though most unjust. Now think me guilty still.

Enter ISABELLA.

Alon. Bear her to instant help. The world to save her!

Leon. Unhappy man! well may'st thou gaze and tremble:
But fix thy terror and amazement right;
Not on my blood, but on thy own distraction.
What hast thou done? Whom censured?—Leonora!
When thou hadst censured, thou wouldst save her life:
O inconsistent! Should I live in shame
Or stoop to any other means but this
To assert my virtue? No; she who disputes,
Admits it possible she might be guilty.

While aught but truth could be my inducement to it,
While it might look like an excuse to thee,
I scorn'd to vindicate my innocence:
But now, I let thy rashness know, the wound,
Which least I feel, is that my dagger made.
[ISABELLA *leads out* LEONORA.

Alon. Ha! was this woman guilty?—And if not—
How my thoughts darken that way! Grant, kind Heaven,
That she prove guilty; or my being end.
Is that my hope, then?

Is it in man the sore distress to bear,
When hope itself is blacken'd to despair,
When all the bliss I pant for, is to gain
In hell, a refuge from severer pain? [*Exit.*

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. How stands the great account 'twixt me and vengeance?
Though much is paid, yet still it owes me much,
And I will not abate a single groan——
Ha! that were well—but that were fatal too——
Why, be it so—Revenge so truly great
Would come too cheap if bought with less than life.
Come, death, come, hell, then! 'tis resolved, 'tis done.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Ah, Zanga, see me tremble! Has not yet
Thy cruel heart its fill?—Poor Leonora——
Zan. Welters in blood, and gasps for her last breath.
What then? We all must die.
Isa. Alonzo raves,
And, in the tempest of his grief, has thrice
Attempted on his life. At length disarm'd,
He calls his friends that save him, his worst foes,

And importunes the skies for swift perdition.
After a pause,
He started up, and call'd aloud for Zanga,
For Zanga raved; and see, he seeks you here,
To learn that truth, which most he dreads to know.
Zan. Begone. Now, now, my soul, consummate all. [*Exit* ISABELLA.

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. Oh, Zanga!
Zan. Do not tremble so, but speak.
Alon. I dare not. [*Falls on him.*
Zan. You will drown me with your tears.
Alon. Have I not cause?
Zan. As yet you have no cause,
Alon. Dost thou too rave?
Zan. Your anguish is to come:
You much have been abused.
Alon. Abused! by whom?
Zan. To know were little comfort.
Alon. O 'twere much!
Zan. Indeed!
Alon. By Heaven! Oh, give him to my fury!
Zan. Born for your use, I live but to oblige you.
Know, then, 'twas——I,
Alon. Am I awake?
Zan. For ever.
Thy wife is guiltless—that's one transport to me;
And I, I let thee know it—that's another.
I urged Don Carlos to resign his mistress;
I forged the letter; I disposed the picture;—
I hated, I despised, and I destroy.
Alon. Oh! [*Swoons.*
Zan. Why, this is well—why, this is blow for blow!
Where are you? Crown me, shadow me with laurels,
Ye spirits, which delight in just revenge!

Let Europe and her pallid sons go weep;
Let Afric and her hundred thrones rejoice:
O, my dear countrymen, look down, and see
How I bestride your prostrate conqueror!
I tread on haughty Spain, and all her kings.
But this is mercy, this is my indulgence;
'Tis peace, 'tis refuge from my indignation.
I must awake him into horrors. Hoa!
Alonzo, hoa! the Moor is at the gate!
Awake, invincible, omnipotent!
Thou, who dost all subdue.

Alon. Inhuman slave!

Zan. Fall'n Christian, thou mistak'st my character.
Look on me. Who am I? I know, thou say'st,
The Moor, a slave, an abject, beaten slave:
(Eternal woes to him that made me so!)
But look again. Has six years cruel bondage
Extinguish'd majesty so far, that nought
Shines here to give an awe of one above thee?
When the great Moorish king, Abdallah, fell,
Fell by thy hand accursed, I fought fast by him,
His son, though, through his fondness, in disguise,
Less to expose me to th' ambitious foe——
Ha! does it wake thee?——O'er my father's corse
I stood astride, till I had clove thy crest;
And then was made the captive of a squadron,
And sunk into thy servant——But, Oh! what,
What were my wages! Hear nor Heaven, nor earth!
My wages were a blow! by Heaven, a blow!
And from a mortal hand!

Alon. Oh, villain, villain!

Zan. All strife is vain. [*Showing a Dagger.*

Alon. Is thus my love return'd?
Is this my recompense? Make friends of tigers!
Lay not your young, O, mothers, on the breast,
For fear they turn to serpents as they lie,
And pay you for their nourishment with death.

Carlos is dead, and Leonora dying!
Both innocent, both murder'd, both by me.
Oh, shame! Oh, guilt! Oh, horror! Oh, remorse!
Oh, punishment! Had Satan never fall'n,
Hell had been made for me.—Oh, Leonora! Leonora! Leonora!

Zan. Must I despise thee too, as well as hate thee?—
Complain of grief! complain thou art a man.
Priam from fortune's lofty summit fell;
Great Alexander 'midst his conquests mourn'd;
Heroes and demigods have known their sorrows;
Cæsars have wept; and I have had my blow:
But 'tis revenged, and now my work is done.
Yet, ere I fall, be it one part of vengeance
To make ev'n thee confess that I am just.—
Thou seest a prince, whose father thou hast slain,
Whose native country thou hast laid in blood,
Whose sacred person, Oh! thou hast profaned!
Whose reign extinguish'd: What was left to me,
So highly born? No kingdom, but revenge;
No treasure, but thy tortures and thy groans.
If cold white mortals censure this great deed,
Warn them, they judge not of superior beings,
Souls made of fire, and children of the sun,
With whom revenge is virtue. Fare thee well——
Now, fully satisfied, I should take leave;
But one thing grieves me, since thy death is near,
I leave thee my example how to die.

As he is going to stab himself, ALONZO *rushes upon him, and prevents him. Enter* DON ALVAREZ, *with* ATTENDANTS. *They seize* ZANGA. ALONZO *puts the Dagger in his bosom.*

Alon. No, monster, thou shalt not escape by death. My father!

Alv. O Alonzo——Isabella,

Touch'd with remorse to see her mistress' pangs,
Told all the dreadful tale.
Alon. What groan was that?
Zan. As I have been a vulture to thy heart,
So will I be a raven to thine ear,

Enter MANUEL, *who whispers* ALVAREZ.

And true as ever snuff'd the scent of blood,
As ever flapp'd its heavy wing against
The window of the sick, and croak'd despair.
Thy wife is dead.
Alv. The dreadful news is true.
Alon. Prepare the rack; invent new torments for him.
Zan. This too is well. The fix'd and noble mind
Turns all occurrence to its own advantage;
And I'll make vengeance of calamity.
Were I not thus reduced, thou wouldst not know,
That, thus reduced, I dare defy thee still.
Torture thou may'st, but thou shalt ne'er despise me.
The blood will follow where the knife is driven,
The flesh will quiver where the pincers tear,
And sighs and cries by nature grow on pain.
But these are foreign to the soul: not mine
The groans that issue, or the tears that fall;
They disobey me: on the rack I scorn thee,
As when my faulchion clove thy helm in battle.
Alv. Peace, villain!
Zan. While I live, old man, I'll speak:
And well I know thou darest not kill me yet;
For that would rob thy bloodhounds of their prey.
Alon. Who call'd Alonzo?
Again!—'Tis Carlos' voice, and I obey.—
Oh, how I laugh at all that this can do!
[*Stabs himself.*
The wounds that pain'd, the wounds that murder'd me,
Were given before; I was already dead;

This only marks my body for the grave.
Afric, thou art revenged.——O, Leonora! [*Dies.*
Zan. Good ruffians, give me leave; my blood is yours,
The wheel's prepared, and you shall have it all;
Let me but look one moment on the dead,
And pay yourselves with gazing on my pangs.
[*He goes to* ALONZO'S *Body.*
Is this Alonzo? Where's the haughty mien?
Is that the hand which smote me? Heavens, how pale
And art thou dead? So is my enmity.
I war not with the dust. The great, the proud,
The conqueror of Afric was my foe.
A lion preys not upon carcases.
This was thy only method to subdue me.
Terror and doubt fall on me: all thy good
Now blazes, all thy guilt is in the grave.
Never had man such funeral applause;
If I lament thee, sure thy worth was great.
O vengeance, I have followed thee too far,
And to receive me, hell blows all her fires.
[*Exit, followed by* ATTENDANTS.

THE END.

BEGGARS OPERA

POLLY. GIVE HER ANOTHER GLASS SIR.
ACT I. SCENE I.

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THE

BEGGAR'S OPERA;

IN THREE ACTS;

By JOHN GAY.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRES ROYAL,

DRURY LANE AND COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS INCHBALD.

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REMARKS.

The celebrated author of this celebrated opera was born to experience variety of fortune; such as plunged him into the bitterest despondency, and such as elevated him to the height of joy.

John Gay was born near Barnstaple, in Devonshire, 1688, and received his education at the grammar school there. He was of an ancient family, and yet was bred a mercer: But having a small independent fortune, and a mind superior to the state in which his relations had placed him, he purchased his freedom from the indentures, which bound him to a shopkeeper, in the Strand, and quitted the counter, where he had attended for several years.

His first production, a poem, called "Rural Sports," printed in 1711, and dedicated to Pope, gained him the acquaintance and friendship of that poet, and introduced him to many other distinguished persons.

The year following, he was made secretary to the Duchess of Monmouth; and soon after accompanied Lord Clarendon, in the same capacity, to Hanover.

Gay seems to have fixed his inclination upon a certain possession, which poets, of all other classes of men, appear most to have despised—money.

With the various earnings of his pen, both as secretary and author, poor Gay, in search of riches, placed all he had accumulated in the bank of the famous South Sea company—His warmest wishes were soon accomplished, and his little fortune became treble.—He was advised to sell out, and purchase an annuity, with his increased store—he waited to have it still augment,—and lost every guinea he was worth in the world.

The poet had neither wife nor child to share in this severe misfortune, and yet it seemed to have struck to his heart.

He was, for a time, inconsolable,—almost driven to despair. But the treasure he still possessed in affectionate and enlightened friends, who sought every method to dissipate his care, at length prevailed; and he began, once more, to write for money, and to save it.

He now produced his tragedy of "The Captives"—had the honour of reading it to the Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Caroline; and the greater honour, of receiving her royal command to write a book of Fables, which was dedicated, by permission, to the young Duke of Cumberland, and most graciously accepted.

Gay's hopes were again elated; he looked forward to [illegible] from the powerful and liberal a patron[illegible]—but in 1727, when this princess ascended the throne another South Sea bubble broke, and he was offered a place at court, which he conceived it an indignity to suppose he would accept.

He refused to be gentleman-usher to one of the young princesses, as an office, in which his peculiar talents would be wholly useless; but though he considered, that insult had been here added to disappointment, yet, as this misfortune occurred without any imprudence or fault of his own, he sunk not under its weight, as when he lost his fortune, in the pursuit of increasing it;—but, irritated by a manly pride against courts and courtiers, was now inspired to compose this admirable drama of "The Beggar's Opera."*

It came out in the season of 1727-8—and on this occasion the author experienced a joy, equal in its excess, to any of his past and bitterest sorrows.

Never had dramatic work been so attractive; and, as the nature of the entertainment was wholly new to an English audience, the author had eulogiums for his invention, beyond the common share allotted to successful authors.

"The Beggar's Opera" was acted sixty-three nights without intermission, and charmed every auditor, except those who were the objects of its satire. Anecdotes, almost incredible, are related of its popularity on its first coming forth; and yet their truth can be easily conceived, when the present force of this excellent work is recollected. At this period, when English operas are no longer a novelty, and some very good ones have appeared, still no entertainment of the kind is allowed to hold an exact equality with this production. At such high estimation, a certain discount is, however, taken from its value. It fails of moral precept.—Nor is that accusation all; it has

the fatal tendency to make vice alluring. The skill of the author is here supremely excellent, though it is grievous he did not show it in a better cause; for, who, but Gay, could have made highwaymen, thieves, and cheats of every denomination, endearing to the delicate, the elegant, and even the honourable spectator?

Still it is to be observed, that the author has rendered the only honest person in the play by far the most interesting character. Polly Peachum is endowed with such superior charms, from the unoffending qualities she possesses, that when she was first represented, every actress who performed the part made her fortune by marriage;—and Miss Fenton, the original Polly, so fascinated the Duke of Bolton, that he elevated her to the highest rank of a female subject, by making her his wife.

It is painful to state, that, after this brilliant success, Gay wrote again, and his drama failed of a kind reception. It seems a paradox, yet it is true, that the author, who has once written well, should write no more; whilst he, who is unsuccessful, had best proceed.—The first may lose a reputation by perseve-
rance, the last may regain one.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY-LANE.	COVENT-GARDEN.
CAPTAIN MACHEATH	*Mr Kelly.*	*Mr Incledon.*
PEACHUM	*Mr Dowton.*	*Mr Munden.*
LOCKIT	*Mr Wewitzer.*	*Mr Emery.*
MAT O' THE MINT	*Mr Cooke.*	*Mr Taylor.*
BEN BUDGE	*Mr Maddocks.*	*Mr Field.*
CROOK-FINGER'D JACK	*Mr Chatterly.*	*Mr Jefferies.*
JEMMY TWITCHER	*Mr Rhodes.*	*Mr Treby.*
WAT DREARY	*Mr Evans.*	*Mr Street.*
NIMMING NED	*Mr Tokely.*	*Mr Atkins.*
HARRY PADDINGTON	*Mr Webb.*	*Mr King.*
ROBIN OF BAGSHOT	*Mr Fisher.*	*Mr Wilde.*
DRAWER		*Mr W. Murray.*
FILCH	*Mr Suett.*	*Mr Simmons.*
MRS PEACHUM	*Mrs Sparks.*	*Mrs Davenport.*
POLLY	*Mrs Mountain.*	*Mrs Dickons.*
LUCY	*Miss De Camp.*	*Mrs C. Kemble.*
MRS COAXER	*Mrs Jones.*	*Mrs Bologna.*
DOLLY TRULL	*Miss Watson.*	*Mrs Grimaldi.*
MRS VIXEN	*Miss Saunders.*	*Miss Cranfield.*
BETTY DOXY	*Mrs Butler.*	*Mrs Iliff.*
JENNY DIVER	*Mrs Gardner.*	*Miss Cox.*
MRS SLAMMEKIN	*Miss Tidswell.*	*Miss Leserve.*
SUKY TAWDRY	*Miss Menage.*	*Mrs Watts.*
[illegible]	*Mrs Coates.*	*Mrs I. Bologna.*
[illegible]	*Mrs Maddocks.*	

BEGGAR'S OPERA.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

PEACHUM'S *House.*

PEACHUM *sitting at a Table, with a large Book of Accounts before him.*

AIR.—PEACHUM.

"An old woman, clothed in grey."

Through all the employments of life,
Each neighbour abuses his brother:
Whore and rogue, they call husband and wife;
All professions be-rogue one another.
The priest calls the lawyer a cheat;
The lawyer be-knaves the divine;
And the statesman, because he's so great,
Thinks his trade is as honest as mine.

A lawyer is an honest employment, so is mine. Like me too, he acts in a double capacity, both against

rogues, and for them; for 'tis but fitting, that we should protect and encourage cheats, since we live by them.

Enter FILCH.

Filch. Sir, Black Moll has sent word, her trial comes on in the afternoon, and she hopes you will order matters so as to bring her off.

Peach. Why, as the wench is very active and industrious, you may satisfy her, that I'll soften the evidence.

Filch. Tom Gagg, sir, is found guilty.

Peach. A lazy dog! When I took him, the time before, I told him what he would come to, if he did not mend his hand. This is death, without reprieve. I may venture to book him; [*Writes.*] for Tom Gagg forty pounds. Let Betty Sly know, that I'll [illegible] her from transportation, for I can get more by [illegible] staying in England.

Filch. Betty hath brought more goods to our [illegible] this year, than any five of the gang; and, in [illegible] 'tis pity to lose so good a customer.

Peach. If none of the gang takes her off, she [illegible] in the common course of business, live a twelve [illegible] longer. I love to let women 'scape. A good [illegible] man always lets the hen-partridges fly, [illegible] breed of the game depends upon them.

[illegible] ard: there is [illegible] en—except our [illegible] , she is a fine wo[illegible] r my education. [illegible] ed up more you [illegible] amp or [illegible] gaming-table. [illegible] ould not be [illegible] hy observation [illegible] ier, braver [illegible] re beholden to w[illegible] had a mur- [illegible] nd truly, all the professions besides.

AIR.—FILCH.

"The bonny grey-eyed morn, &c."

'Tis woman that seduces all mankind;
By her we first were taught the wheedling arts;
Her very eyes can cheat; when most she's kind,
She tricks us of our money, with our hearts.
For her, like wolves by night, we roam for prey,
And practise every fraud to bribe her charms;
For, suits of love, like law, are won by pay,
And beauty must be fee'd into our arms.

Peach. But make haste to Newgate, boy, and let my friends know what I intend; for I love to make them easy, one way or another.

Filch. When a gentleman is long kept in suspence, ...ence may break his spirit ever after. Besides, ...ity gives a man a good air upon his trial, and ...him risk another, without fear or scruple. But ...way, for 'tis a pleasure to be a messenger of ...rt to friends in affliction. [*Exit.*

PE... ...h. But it is now high time to look about me, ...ecent execution against next sessions. I hate a ...gue, by whom one can get nothing, till he is ... register of the gang, [*Reading.*] *Crook-... Jack—a year and a half in the service*——let ... Th... ...much the stock owes to his industry:— ... Ea... ...e, four, five gold watches, and seven sil- ... Wh... ... mighty clean-handed fellow! sixteen ... five of them of true gold, six dozen of ... ...s, four silver-hilted swords, half-a-dozen ... ...e tie-perriwigs, and a piece of broad- ...sidering, these are only the fruits of his ... I don't know a prettier fellow; for no ... a more engaging presence of mind ... ...ary, alias Brown Will*—an ... ...hath an underhand way of dispo-

sing of his goods; I'll try him only for a sessions or two longer, upon his good behaviour. *Harry Paddington*—a poor, petty-larceny rascal, without the least genius! that fellow, though he were to live these six months, will never come to the gallows with any credit.—*Slippery Sam*—he goes off the next sessions; for the villain hath the impudence to have views of following his trade as a tailor, which he calls an honest employment.—*Mat o' th' Mint*—listed not above a month ago; a promising, sturdy fellow, and diligent in his way; somewhat too bold and hasty, and may raise good contributions on the public, if he does not cut himself short by murder:—*Tom Tipple*—a guzzling, soaking sot, who is always too drunk to stand himself, or to make others stand; a cart is absolutely necessary for him. *Robin of Bagshot, alias Gorgon, alias Bluff Bob, alias Carbuncle, alias Bob Booty*——

Enter MRS PEACHUM.

Mrs P. What of Bob Booty, husband? I hope nothing bad hath betided him—You know, my dear, he's a favourite customer of mine—'twas he made me a present of this ring.

Peach. I have set his name down in the black list, that's all, my dear; he spends his life among women, and, as soon as his money is gone, one or other of the ladies will hang him for the reward, and there's forty pounds lost to us for ever!

Mrs P. You know, my dear, I never meddle in matters of death; I leave those affairs to you. Women, indeed, are bad judges in these cases; for they are so partial to the brave, that they think every man handsome, who is going to the gallows.—But, husband, you should not be too hard-hearted, for you never had a finer set of men, than at present. We have not had a murder among them all these seven months; and, my dear, that is a great blessing.

Peach. What a dickens is the woman always whimpering about murder for? No gentleman is ever looked upon the worse for killing a man in his own defence; and if business cannot be carried on without it, what would you have a gentleman do? so, my dear, have done upon this subject. Was Captain Macheath here, this morning, for the bank-notes he left with you last week?

Mrs P. Yes, my dear; and though the bank hath stopped payment, he was so cheerful, and so agreeable! Sure, there is not a finer gentleman upon the road than the captain! if he comes from Bagshot, at any reasonable hour, he hath promised to make one this evening, with Polly, me, and Bob Booty, at a party at quadrille. Pray, my dear, is the captain rich?

Peach. The captain keeps too good company ever to grow rich. Marybone and the chocolate-houses are his undoing. The man that proposes to get money by play, should have the education of a fine gentleman, and be trained up to it from his youth.

Mrs P. Really, I am sorry, upon Polly's account, the captain hath not more discretion. What business hath he to keep company with lords and gentlemen? he should leave them to prey upon one another.

Peach. Upon Polly's account! what a plague doth the woman mean?—Upon Polly's account!

Mrs P. Captain Macheath is very fond of the girl.

Peach. And what then?

Mrs P. If I have my skill in the ways of women, I am sure Polly thinks him a very pretty man.

Peach. And what then? you would not be so mad as to have the wench marry him! Gamesters and highwaymen are, generally, very good to their whores, but they are very devils to their wives.

Mrs P. But if Polly should be in love, how should we help her, or how can she help herself?—Poor girl, I'm in the utmost concern about her!

Peach. Look ye, wife, a handsome wench, in our way of business, is as profitable, as at the bar of a Temple coffee-house, who looks upon it as her livelihood, to grant every liberty but one. My daughter to me should be like a court lady to a minister of state, a key to the whole gang. Married! if the affair is not already done, I'll terrify her from it, by the example of our neighbours.

Mrs P. Mayhap, my dear, you may injure the poor girl: she loves to imitate the fine ladies, and she may only allow the captain liberties, in the view of interest.

Peach. But 'tis your duty, my dear, to warn the girl against her ruin, and to instruct her how to make the most of her beauty. I'll go to her this moment, and sift her. In the mean time, wife, rip out the coronets and marks of these dozen of cambric handkerchiefs, for I can dispose of them this afternoon to a chap in the city. [*Exit.*

Mrs P. Never was a man more out of the way in an argument than my husband. Why must our Polly, forsooth, differ from her sex, and love only her husband? Why must Polly's marriage, contrary to all other precedent, make her the less followed by other men? Are not thieves in love, and like a woman the better for being another's property.

Enter FILCH.

Mrs P. Come hither, Filch.—I am as fond of this child, as though my mind misgave me, he were my own. He hath as fine a hand at picking a pocket as a woman, and is as nimble fingered as a juggler. If an unlucky session does not cut the rope of thy life, I pronounce, boy, thou wilt be a great man in history. Where was your post last night, my boy?

Filch. I plied at the opera, madam; and, considering 'twas neither dark nor rainy, so that there was no great hurry in getting chairs and coaches, made a to-

lerable hand on't—These seven handkerchiefs, madam.

Mrs P. Coloured ones, I see. They are of sure sale from our warehouse at Redriff, among the seamen.

Filch. And this snuff-box.

Mrs P. Set in gold! a pretty encouragement this to a young beginner!

Filch. I had a fair tug at a charming gold-watch. Pox take the tailors, for making the fobs so deep and narrow!—it stuck by the way, and I was forced to make my escape under a coach. Really, madam, I fear I shall be cut off in the flower of my youth, so that, every now and then, since I was pumped, I have thoughts of taking up and going to sea.

Mrs P. You should go to Hockley-in-the-Hole, and to Marybone, child, to learn valour; these are the schools that have bred so many brave men. I thought, boy, by this time, thou hadst lost fear as well as shame. Poor lad! how little does he know yet of the Old Bailey! For the first fact, I'll insure thee from being hanged; and going to sea, Filch, will come time enough, upon a sentence of transportation. But now, since you have nothing better to do, ev'n go to your book, and learn your catechism: for really a man makes but an ill figure in the ordinary's paper, who cannot give a satisfactory answer to his questions. But, hark you, my lad, don't tell me a lie; for you know I hate a liar:—Do you know of any thing that hath passed between Captain Macheath and our Polly?

Filch. I beg you, madam, don't ask me; for I must either tell a lie to you, or to Miss Polly; for I promised her I would not tell.

Mrs P. But when the honour of our family is concerned.

Filch. I shall lead a sad life with Miss Polly, if ever she comes to know I told you. Besides, I would not

willingly forfeit my own honour, by betraying any body.

Mrs P. Yonder comes my husband and Polly. Come, Filch, you shall go with me into my own room, and tell me the whole story. I'll give thee a glass of a most delicious cordial that I keep for my own drinking. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PEACHUM *and* POLLY.

Polly. I know as well as any of the fine ladies how to make the most of myself, and of my man too. A woman knows how to be mercenary, though she hath never been in a court or at an assembly. We have it in our natures, papa. If I allow Captain Macheath some trifling liberties, I have this watch and other visible marks of his favour to show for it. A girl who cannot grant some things, and refuse what is most material, will make but a poor hand of her beauty, and soon be thrown upon the common.

AIR.

"What shall I do to show how much I love her?"

Virgins are like the fair flow'r in its lustre,
Which in the garden enamels the ground,
Near it the bees in play flutter and cluster,
And gaudy butterflies frolic around;

But when once pluck'd 'tis no longer alluring,
To Covent Garden 'tis sent, (as yet sweet)
There fades, and shrinks, and grows past all enduring,
Stinks, and dies, and is trod under feet.

Peach. You know, Polly, I am not against your toying and [illegible] with a customer, in the way of business, or to get out a secret or so; but if I find out that you have played the fool, and are married, you

jade you, I'll cut your throat, hussy. Now, you know my mind.

Enter MRS PEACHUM, *in a very great passion.*

AIR.

"O London is a fine town."

Our Polly is a sad slut! nor heeds what we have taught her,
I wonder any man alive will ever rear a daughter!
For she must have both hoods and gowns, and hoops to swell her pride,
With scarfs and stays, and gloves and lace, and she will have men beside;
And when she's dress'd with care and cost, all tempting, fine and gay,
As men should serve a cucumber, she flings herself away.

You baggage! you hussy! you inconsiderate jade! had you been hanged it would not have vexed me; for that might have been your misfortune; but to do such a mad thing by choice!——The wench is married, husband.

Peach. Married! the captain is a bold man, and will risk any thing for money: to be sure he believes her a fortune. Do you think your mother and I should have lived comfortably so long together if ever we had been married, baggage?

Mrs P. I knew she was always a proud slut, and now the wench hath played the fool and married, because, forsooth, she would do like the gentry! Can you support the expense of a husband, hussy, in gaming and drinking? have you money enough to carry on the daily quarrels of man and wife about who shall squander most? If you must be married, could you introduce nobody into our family but a highwayman? Why, thou foolish jade, thou wilt be as ill used

and as much neglected as if thou hadst married a lord!

Peach. Let not your anger, my dear, break through the rules of decency; for the captain looks upon himself, in the military capacity, as a gentleman by his profession. Besides what he hath already, I know he is in a fair way of getting or of dying; and both these ways, let me tell you, are most excellent chances for a wife. Tell me, hussy, are you ruined or no?

Mrs P. With Polly's fortune she might very well have gone off to a person of distinction: yes, that you might, you pouting slut.

Peach. What! is the wench dumb? speak, or I'll make you plead by squeezing out an answer from you. Are you really bound wife to him, or are you only upon liking? [*Pinches her.*

Polly. Oh! [*Screaming.*

Mrs P. How the mother is to be pitied who hath handsome daughters! Locks, bolts, bars, and lectures of morality, are nothing to them; they break through them all; they have as much pleasure in cheating a father and mother as in cheating at cards.

Peach. Why, Polly, I shall soon know if you are married, by Macheath's keeping from our house.

AIR.—POLLY.

"Grim king of the ghosts, &c."

Can love be controll'd by advice?
Will Cupid our mothers obey?
Tho' my heart were as frozen as ice,
At his flame 'twould have melted away.
When he kiss'd me, so sweetly he press'd,
The kiss was so sweet that I must have complied,
So I thought it both safest and best
To marry for fear you should chide.

Mrs P. Then all the hopes of our family are gone for ever and ever!

Peach. And Macheath may hang his father and mother-in-law, in hopes to get into their daughter's fortune.

Polly. I did not marry him, (as 'tis the fashion) coolly and deliberately, for honour or money——but I love him.

Mrs P. Love him! worse and worse! I thought the girl had been better bred. Oh husband! husband! her folly makes me mad! my head swims! I'm distracted! I can't support myself——Oh! [*Faints.*

Peach. See, wench, to what a condition you have reduced your poor mother! A glass of cordial this instant! How the poor woman takes it to heart! [POLLY *goes out, and returns with it.*] Ah, hussy! now this is the only comfort your mother has left.

Polly. Give her another glass, sir; my mamma drinks double the quantity whenever she is out of order. This, you see, fetches her.

Mrs P. The girl shows such readiness, and so much concern, that I almost could find in my heart to forgive her.

AIR.

"O Jenny, O Jenny, where hast thou been?"

O Polly, you might have toy'd and kiss'd:
By keeping men off you keep them on.
Polly. *But he so teased me,*
And he so pleased me,
What I did you must have done.

Mrs P. Not with a highwayman—you sorry slut—

Peach. A word with you, wife. 'Tis no new thing for a wench to take a man without consent of parents. You know 'tis the frailty of woman, my dear!

Mrs P. Yes, indeed, the sex is frail; but the first time a woman is frail, she should be somewhat nice methinks, for then or never is her time to make her

fortune: after that she hath nothing to do but to guard herself from being found out, and she may do what she pleases.

Peach. Make yourself a little easy; I have a thought shall soon set all matters again to rights. Why so melancholy, Polly? since what is done cannot be undone, we must endeavour to make the best of it.

Mrs P. Well, Polly, as far as one woman can forgive another, I forgive thee.—Your father is too fond of you, hussy.

Polly. Then all my sorrows are at an end.

Mrs P. A mighty likely speech in troth for a wench who is just married!

AIR.—POLLY.

"Thomas, I cannot, &c."

I like a ship in storms was toss'd,
Yet afraid to put into land,
For seized in the port the vessel's lost
Whose treasure is contraband.
The waves are laid,
My duty's paid;
Joy beyond expression is:
Thus safe ashore
I ask no more;
My all's in my possession.

Peach. I hear customers in t'other room; go talk with them, Polly; but come again as soon as they are gone.—But hark ye, child, if 'tis the gentleman who was here yesterday about the repeating watch, say you can't give intelligence of it till to-morrow, for I lent it to Straddle, to make a figure with to-night at a tavern in Drury-lane. If t'other gentleman calls for the silver-hilted sword, you know beetle-headed Jemmy hath it on, and he doth not come

from Tunbridge till Tuesday night, so that it cannot be had till then. [*Exit* POLLY.] Dear wife, be a little pacified; don't let your passion run away with your senses: Polly, I grant you, hath done a rash thing.

Mrs P. If she had had only an intrigue with the fellow, why the very best families have excused and huddled up a frailty of that sort. 'Tis marriage, husband, that makes it a blemish.

Peach. But money, wife, is the true fuller's earth for reputations; there is not a spot or stain but what it can take out. I tell you, wife, I can make this match turn to our advantage.

Mrs P. I am very sensible, husband, that Captain Macheath is worth money, but I am in doubt whether he hath not two or three wives already, and then, if he should die in a session or two, Polly's dower would come into dispute.

Peach. That indeed is a point which ought to be considered. The lawyers are bitter enemies to those in our way; they don't care that any body should get a clandestine livelihood but themselves.

Enter POLLY.

Polly. 'Twas only Nimming Ned: he brought in a damask window-curtain, a hoop-petticoat, a pair of silver candlesticks, a perriwig, and one silk stocking from the fire that happened last night.

Peach. There is not a fellow that is cleverer in his way, and saves more goods out of the fire, than Ned. But now, Polly, to your affair; for matters must not be as they are. You are married then, it seems?

Polly. Yes, sir.

Peach. And how do you propose to live, child?

Polly. Like other women, sir; upon the industry of my husband.

Mrs P. What! is the wench turn'd fool? a highwayman's wife, like a soldier's, hath as little of his pay as of his company.

Peach. And had not you the common views of a gentlewoman in your marriage, Polly?

Polly. I don't know what you mean, sir.

Peach. Of a jointure, and of being a widow.

Polly. But I love him, sir: how then could I have thoughts of parting with him?

Peach. Parting with him! why that is the whole scheme and intention of all marriage articles. The comfortable estate of widowhood is the only hope that keeps up a wife's spirits. Where is the woman who would scruple to be a wife, if she had it in her power to be a widow whenever she pleased? If you have any views of this sort, Polly, I shall think the match not so very unreasonable.

Polly. How I dread to hear your advice! yet I must beg you to explain yourself.

Peach. Secure what he hath got, have him peach'd the next sessions, and then at once you are made a rich widow.

Polly. What! murder the man I love! the blood runs cold at my heart with the very thought of it!

Peach. Fie, Polly! what hath murder to do in the affair? Since the thing sooner or later must happen, I dare say that the captain himself would like that we should get the reward for his death sooner than a stranger. Why, Polly, the captain knows that as 'tis his employment to rob, so, 'tis ours to take robbers; every man in his business: so that there is no malice in the case.

Mrs P. To have him peached is the only thing could ever make me forgive her.

AIR.—POLLY.

"Now ponder well, ye parents dear."

Oh ponder well! be not severe:
So save a wretched wife,
For on the rope that hangs my dear,
Depends poor Polly's life.

Mrs P. But your duty to your parents, hussy, obliges you to hang him. What would many a wife give for such an opportunity!

Polly. What is a jointure, what is widowhood, to me? I know my heart; I cannot survive him. Thus, sir, it will happen to your poor Polly.

Mrs P. What! is the fool in love in earnest then? I hate thee for being particular. Why, wench, thou art a shame to thy very sex!

Polly. But hear me, mother—if you ever loved—

Mrs P. Those cursed play books she reads have been her ruin! One word more, hussy, and I shall knock your brains out, if you have any.

Peach. Keep out of the way, Polly, for fear of mischief, and consider of what is proposed to you.

Mrs P. Away, hussy. Hang your husband, and be dutiful. [POLLY *listens.*] The thing, husband, must and shall be done. If she will not know her duty, we know ours.

Peach. But really, my dear, it grieves one's heart to take off a great man. When I consider his personal bravery, his fine stratagems, how much we have already got by him, and how much more we may get, methinks I can't find in my heart to have a hand in his death: I wish you could have made Polly undertake it.

Mrs P. But in case of necessity—our own lives are in danger.

Peach. Then indeed we must comply with the customs of the world, and make gratitude give way to interest—He shall be taken off.

Mrs P. I'll undertake to manage Polly.

Peach. And I'll prepare matters for the Old Bailey.

[*Exeunt* PEACHUM *and* MRS PEACHUM.

Polly. Now I'm a wretch indeed!—Methinks I see him already in the cart, sweeter and more lovely than the nosegay in his hand!—I hear the crowd extolling his resolution and intrepidity!—I see him at the tree!

the whole circle are in tears!—What then will become of Polly?—As yet I may inform him of their design, and aid him in his escape.—It shall be so.—But then he flies, absents himself, and I bar myself from his dear, dear conversation! that too will distract me.—If he keeps out of the way, my papa and mamma may in time relent, and we may be happy—If he stays, he is hanged, and then he is lost for ever!—He intended to lie concealed in my room till the dusk of the evening. If they are abroad, I'll this instant let him out, lest some accident should prevent him.

Enter MACHEATH.

AIR.

"Pretty parrot, say," &c.

Mac. *Pretty Polly, say,*
When I was away,
Did your fancy never stray
To some newer lover?

Polly. *Without disguise,*
Heaving sighs,
Doting eyes,
My constant heart discover.
Fondly let me loll!

Mac. *O pretty, pretty Poll!*

Polly. And are you as fond of me as ever, my dear?

Mac. Suspect my honour, my courage, suspect anything but my love.—May my pistols miss fire, and my mare shy her shoulder while I am pursued, if ever I forsake thee!

Polly. Nay, my dear! I have no reason to doubt you, for I find, in the romance you lent me, none of the great heroes were false in love.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

"Pray, fair one, be kind."

My heart was so free,
It roved like the bee,
Till Polly my passion requited;
I sipt each flower,
I changed ev'ry hour,
But here ev'ry flow'r is united.

Polly. Were you sentenced to transportation, sure, my dear, you could not leave me behind you—could you?

Mac. Is there any power, any force, that could tear me from thee? You might sooner tear a pension out of the hands of a courtier, a fee from a lawyer, a pretty woman from a looking-glass, or any woman from quadrille—But to tear me from thee is impossible!

AIR.

"Over the hills and far away."

Mac. *Were I laid on Greenland's coast,*
And in my arms embraced my lass,
Warm amidst eternal frost,
Too soon the half year's night would pass.
Polly. *Were I sold on Indian soil,*
Soon as the burning day was closed,
I could mock the sultry toil
When on my charmer's breast reposed.
Mac. *And I would love you all the day,*
Polly. *Every night would kiss and play,*
Mac. *If with me you'd fondly stray,*
Polly. *Over the hills, and far away.*

Polly. Yes, I would go with thee. But oh!——

how shall I speak it? I must be torn from thee! We must part!

Mac. How! part!

Polly. We must, we must!—My papa and mamma are set against thy life: they now, even now, are in search after thee; they are preparing evidence against thee; thy life depends upon a moment!

AIR.—POLLY.

"Gin thou wert my awn thing."

O, what a pain it is to part!
Can I leave thee, can I leave thee?
O, what a pain it is to part!
Can thy Polly ever leave thee?
But lest death my love should thwart,
And bring thee to the fatal cart,
Thus I tear thee from my bleeding heart!
Fly hence, and let me leave thee.

One kiss, and then!—one kiss!—Begone!—Farewell!

Mac. My hand, my heart, my dear, is so rivetted to thine, that I cannot unloose my hold!

Polly. But my papa may intercept thee, and then I should lose the very glimmering of hope. A few weeks, perhaps, may reconcile us all. Shall thy Polly hear from thee?

Mac. Must I then go?

Polly. And will not absence change your love?

Mac. If you doubt it, let me stay—and be hanged.

Polly. Oh, how I fear! how I tremble!—Go—but when safety will give you leave, you will be sure to see me again; for, till then, Polly is wretched.

AIR.

"O the broom," &c.

Mac. *The miser thus a shilling sees,*
Which he's obliged to pay,
With sighs resigns it by degrees,
And fears 'tis gone for aye.

Polly. *The boy thus, when his sparrow's flown,*
The bird in silence eyes;
But soon as out of sight 'tis gone,
Whines, whimpers, sobs, and cries. [Exeunt.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Tavern near Newgate.

JEMMY TWITCHER, CROOKFINGER'D JACK, WAT DREARY, ROBIN OF BAGSHOT, NIMMING NED, HARRY PADDINGTON, MAT-O'-THE-MINT, BEN BUDGE, *and the Rest of the Gang, at the Table, with Wine, Brandy, and Tobacco.*

Ben. But pr'ythee, Mat, what is become of thy brother Tom? I have not seen him since my return from transportation.

Mat. Poor brother Tom had an accident, this time twelvemonth, and so clever made a fellow as he was, I could not save him from these stealing rascals, the surgeons; and now, poor man, he is among the otamies, at Surgeons' Hall.

Ben. So, it seems, his time was come.

Jemmy. But the present time is ours, and nobody alive hath more. Why are the laws levelled at us? are we more dishonest than the rest of mankind? What we win, gentlemen, is our own, by the law of arms, and the right of conquest.

Jack. Where shall we find such another set of practical philosophers, who, to a man, are above the fear of death?

Wat. Sound men and true!

Robin. Of tried courage, and indefatigable industry!

Ned. Who is there here that would not die for his friend?

Harry. Who is there here that would betray him for his interest?

Mat. Show me a gang of courtiers that can say as much.

Ben. We are for a just partition of the world; for every man has a right to enjoy life.

Mat. We retrench the superfluities of mankind. The world is avaricious, and I hate avarice. A covetous fellow, like a jackdaw, steals what he was never made to enjoy, for the sake of hiding it. These are the robbers of mankind; for money was made for the free-hearted and generous: and where is the injury of taking from another what he hath not the heart to make use of?

Jemmy. Our several stations for the day are fixed. Good luck attend us all! Fill the glasses!

AIR.—MAT.

"Fill ev'ry glass," &c.

Fill ev'ry glass, for wine inspires us,
And fires us,
With courage, love, and joy.
Women and wine should life employ;
Is there aught else on earth desirous?

Chorus. *Fill ev'ry glass, &c.*

Enter MACHEATH.

Mac. Gentlemen, well met; my heart hath been with you this hour, but an unexpected affair hath detained me. No ceremony, I beg you!

Mat. We were just breaking up, to go upon duty. Am I to have the honour of taking the air with you, sir, this evening, upon the Heath? I drink a dram, now and then, with the stage-coachmen, in the way of friendship and intelligence; and I know that, about this time, there will be passengers upon the western road, who are worth speaking with.

Mac. I was to have been of that party—but—

Mat. But what, sir?

Mac. Is there any one that suspects my courage?

Mat. We have all been witnesses of it.

Mac. My honour and truth to the gang?

Mat. I'll be answerable for it.

Mac. In the division of our booty, have I ever shown the least marks of avarice or injustice?

Mat. By these questions, something seems to have ruffled you. Are any of us suspected?

Mac. I have a fixed confidence, gentlemen, in you all, as men of honour, and as such I value and respect you. Peachum is a man that is useful to us.

Mat. Is he about to play us any foul play? I'll shoot him through the head.

Mac. I beg you, gentlemen, act with conduct and discretion. A pistol is your last resort.

Mat. He knows nothing of this meeting.

Mac. Business cannot go on without him: he is a man who knows the world, and is a necessary agent to us. We have had a slight difference, and, till it is accommodated, I shall be obliged to keep out of his way. Any private dispute of mine shall be of no ill consequence to my friends. You must continue to act under his direction; for, the moment we break loose from him, our gang is ruined.

Mat. He is, to us, of great convenience.

Mac. Make him believe I have quitted the gang, which I can never do but with life. At our private quarters I will continue to meet you. A week, or so, will probably reconcile us.

Mat. Your instructions shall be observed. 'Tis now high time for us to repair to our several duties; so, till the evening, at our quarters in Moorfields, we bid you farewell.

Mac. I shall wish myself with you. Success attend you. [*Sits down, melancholy, at the Table.*

AIR.—MAT.

March in Rinaldo, with Drums and Trumpets.

Let us take the road;
Hark! I hear the sound of coaches,
The hour of attack approaches,
To your arms, brave boys, and load.
See the ball I hold!
Let the chemists toil like asses,
Our fire their fire surpasses,
And turns all our lead to gold.

[*The* GANG, *ranged in the Front of the Stage, load their Pistols, and stick them under their Girdles, then go off, singing the first part in Chorus.*

Mac. What a fool is a fond wench! Polly is most confoundedly bit. I love the sex; and a man who loves money might as well be contented with one guinea, as I with one woman. The town, perhaps, hath been as much obliged to me for recruiting it with free-hearted ladies, as to any recruiting officer in the army. If it were not for us and the other gentlemen of the sword, Drury-Lane would be uninhabited.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

"Would you have a young virgin."

If the heart of a man is depress'd with cares,
The mist is dispell'd when a woman appears;
Like the notes of a fiddle, she sweetly, sweetly,
Raises the spirits, and charms our ears.
Roses and lilies her cheeks disclose,
But her ripe lips are more sweet than those;
Press her,
Caress her,
With blisses,
Her kisses
Dissolve us in pleasure and soft repose.

I must have women—there is nothing unbends the mind like them: money is not so strong a cordial for the time——Drawer!

Enter DRAWER.

Is the porter gone for all the ladies, according to my directions?

Drawer. I expect him back every minute: but you know, sir, you sent him as far as Hockley-in-the-Hole for three of the ladies; for one in Vinegar Yard, and

for the rest of them, somewhere about Lewkner's Lane. Sure some of them are below, for I hear the bar bell. As they come, I will show them up. Coming! coming. [*Exit.*

Enter MRS COAXER, DOLLY TRULL, MRS VIXEN, BETTY DOXY, JENNY DIVER, MRS SLAMMEKIN, SUKEY TAWDRY, *and* MOLLY BRAZEN.

Mac. Dear Mrs Coaxer, you are welcome! you look charmingly to-day: I hope you don't want the repairs of quality, and lay on paint.—Dolly Trull! kiss me, you slut! are you as amorous as ever, hussy? you are always so taken up with stealing hearts, that you don't allow yourself time to steal any thing else.—Ah, Dolly, thou wilt ever be a coquette.—Mrs Vixen, I'm yours! I always loved a woman of wit and spirit; they make charming mistresses, but plaguy wives.—Betty Doxy! come hither, hussy: do you drink as hard as ever? you had better stick to good wholesome beer, for, in troth, Betty, strong waters will, in time, ruin your constitution: you should leave those to your betters.—What, and my pretty Jenny Diver too! as prim and demure as ever! there is not any prude, though ever so high bred, hath a more sanctified look, with a more mischievous heart: ah, thou art a dear, artful hypocrite!—Mrs Slammekin! as careless and genteel as ever! all you fine ladies, who know your own beauty, affect an undress. —But see! here's Sukey Tawdry come to contradict what I was saying.—Molly Brazen! [*She kisses him.*] Th' t's well done! I love a free-hearted wench: thou hast a most agreeable assurance, girl, and art as willing as a turtle.—But hark! I hear music! "If music be the food of love, play on!" Ere you seat yourselves, ladies, what think you of a dance Come in.

Enter HARPER.

Play the French tune that Mrs Slammekin is so fond of.

A Dance; then this Song and Chorus.

AIR.

Cotillion.

Youth's the season made for joys,
Love is then our duty;
She alone who that employs,
Well deserves her beauty:
Let's be gay,
While we may,
Beauty's a flower despised in decay.

Chorus. *Youth's the season, &c.*

Let us drink and sport to-day,
Ours is not to-morrow;
Love with youth flies swift away,
Age is nought but sorrow.
Dance and sing,
Time's on the wing,
Life never knows the return of spring.

Chorus. *Let us drink, &c.*

Mac. Now, pray, ladies, take your places. Here, drawer, bring us more wine. If any of the ladies chuse gin, I hope they will be so free as to call for it.

Jenny. You look as if you meant me. Wine is strong enough for me. Indeed, sir, I never drink strong waters but when I have the cholic.

Mac. Just the excuse of the fine ladies! why, a

lady of quality is never without the cholic. I hope, Mrs Coaxer, you have had good success of late in your visits among the mercers.

Mrs C. We have so many interlopers; yet, with industry, one may still have a little picking.—If any woman hath more art than another, to be sure 'tis Jenny Diver.

Mac. Have done with your compliments, ladies, and drink about. You are not so fond of me, Jenny, as you used to be.

Jenny. 'Tis not convenient, sir, to show my fondness among so many rivals. 'Tis your own choice, and not the warmth of my inclination, that will determine you.—But, to be sure, sir, with so much good fortune as you have had upon the road, you must be grown immensely rich.

Mac. The road, indeed, hath done me justice, but the gaming table hath been my ruin.

Jenny. A man of courage should never put any thing to the risk but his life. These are the tools of a man of honour: cards and dice are only fit for cowardly cheats, who prey upon their friends.

[*She takes up his Pistol;* SUKEY TAWDRY *takes up the other.*

Sukey. This, sir, is fitter for your hand. Besides your loss of money, 'tis a loss to the ladies. How fond could I be of you! but, before company, 'tis ill bred.

Mac. Wanton hussies!

Jenny. I must, and will, have a kiss, to give my wine a zest.

[*They take him about the Neck, and make Signs to* PEACHUM *and* CONSTABLES, *who rush in upon him.*

Peach. I seize you, sir, as my prisoner.

Mac Was this well done, Jenny?—Women are decoy ducks; who can trust them? beasts, jades, jilts, harpies, furies, whores!

Peach. Your case, Mr Macheath, is not particular. The greatest heroes have been ruined by women.—But, to do them justice, I must own they are a pretty sort of creatures, if we could trust them. You must now, sir, take your leave of the ladies; and, if they have a mind to make you a visit, they will be sure to find you at home. This gentleman, ladies, lodges in Newgate. Constables, wait upon the Captain to his lodgings.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

"When first I laid siege to my Chloris."

At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure,
At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure,
Let me go where I will,
In all kinds of ill,
I shall find no such furies as these are.

[Exit MACHEATH, *guarded with* PEACHUM *and* CONSTABLES; *and the* LADIES *after, with great Ceremony.*

SCENE II.

Newgate.

[illegible]er LOCKIT, TURNKEYS, MACHEATH, *and* CONSTABLES.

[illegible] Noble Captain, you are welcome! you have [illegible]lodger of mine this year and a half. You [illegible]stom, sir; garnish, Captain, garnish.—[illegible]own those fetters there.

Mac. Those, Mr Lockit, seem to be the heaviest of the whole set. With your leave, I should like the further pair better.

Lockit. Look ye, Captain, we know what is fittest for our prisoners. When a gentleman uses me with civility, I always do the best I can to please him.—Hand them down, I say.—We have them of all prices, from one guinea to ten; and 'tis fitting every gentleman should please himself.

Mac. I understand you, sir. [*Gives Money.*] The fees here are so many, and so exorbitant, that few fortunes can bear the expense of getting off handsomely, or of dying like a gentleman.

Lockit. Those, I see, will fit the Captain better.—Take down the further pair.—Do but examine them, sir—Never was better work—How genteelly they are made!—They will sit as easy as a glove, and the nicest man in England might not be ashamed to wear them. [*He puts on the Chains.*] If I had the best gentleman in the land in my custody, I could not equip him more handsomely. And so, sir—I now leave you to your private meditations.

[*Exeunt* LOCKIT, TURNKEYS, *and* CONSTABLES.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

"Courtiers, courtiers, think it no harm."

Man may escape from rope and gun,
Nay, some have outlived the doctor's pill;
Who takes a woman must be undone,
That basilisk is sure to kill.
The fly, that sips treacle, is lost in the sir
So h[illegible] that tastes woman, woman, wor
He, that tastes woman, ruin meets.

To what a woeful plight have I brou
Here must I (all day long till I am ha

fident to hear the reproaches of a wench, who lays her ruin at my door—I am in the custody of her father; and, to be sure, if he knows of the matter, I shall have a fine time on't betwixt this and my execution.—But I promised the wench marriage.—What signifies a promise to a woman? does not man, in marriage itself, promise a hundred things that he never means to perform? Do all we can, women will believe us: for they look upon a promise as an excuse for following their own inclinations.—But here comes Lucy, and I cannot get from her—'would I were deaf!

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. You base man, you!—how can you look me in the face, after what hath past between us?—Oh, Macheath! thou hast robbed me of my quiet—to see thee tortured would give me pleasure.

AIR.—LUCY.

"A lovely lass to a friar came."

Thus, when a good housewife sees a rat
In her trap in the morning taken,
With pleasure her heart goes pit-a-pat,
In revenge for her loss of bacon.
Then she throws him
To the dog or cat,
To be worried, crush'd, and shaken.

[illegible]*ac.* Have you no bowels, no tenderness, my dear [illegible] to see a husband in these circumstances?

[illegible] A husband!

[illegible]n every respect but the form, and that, my [illegible] be said over us at any time.——Friends [illegible]n a [illegible]sist upon ceremonies. From a man of [illegible]e [illegible]ord is as good as his bond. [illegible]ne d[illegible]

Lucy. It is the pleasure of all you fine men to insult the women you have ruined.

Mac. The very first opportunity, my dear, (but have patience) you shall be my wife in whatever manner you please.

Lucy. Insinuating monster! And so you think I know nothing of the affair of Miss Polly Peachum? —I could tear thy eyes out.

Mac. Sure, Lucy, you can't be such a fool as to be jealous of Polly!

Lucy. Are you not married to her, you brute you?

Mac. Married! very good. The wench gives it out only to vex thee, and to ruin me in thy good opinion. 'Tis true I go to the house, I chat with the girl, I kiss her, I say a thousand things to her (as all gentlemen do) that mean nothing, to divert myself; and now the silly jade hath set it about that I am married to her, to let me know what she would be at. Indeed, my dear Lucy! those violent passions may be of ill consequence to a woman in your condition.

Lucy. Come, come, captain, for all your assurance, you know that Miss Polly hath put it out of your power to do me the justice you promised me.

Mac. A jealous woman believes every thing her passion suggests. To convince you of my sincerity, if we can find the ordinary, I shall have no scruples of making you my wife; and I know the consequence of having two at a time.

Lucy. That you are only to be hanged, and so get rid of them both.

Mac. I am ready, my dear Lucy! to give you satisfaction—if you think there is any in marr[illegible] What can a man of honour say more?

Lucy. So then it seems you are not married Polly?

Mac. You know, Lucy, the girl is proc[illegible] conceited: no man can say a civil thing to [illegible]

like other fine ladies) her vanity makes her think he's her own for ever and ever.

AIR.

"The Sun had loosed his weary teams."

The first time at the looking-glass
The mother sets her daughter,
The image strikes the smiling lass
With self-love ever after.
Each time she looks, she, fonder grown,
Thinks every charm grows stronger;
But, alas, vain maid! all eyes but your own
Can see you are not younger.

When women consider their own beauties, they are all alike unreasonable in their demands; for they expect their lovers should like them as long as they like themselves.

[illegible]*y.* Yonder is my father——Perhaps this way may light upon the ordinary, who shall try if you will be as good as your word——for I long to be made an honest woman. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PEACHUM *and* LOCKIT, *with an Account Book.*

[illegible]*ockit.* In this last affair, brother Peachum, we are [illegible]l. You have consented to go halves in Mac-

[illegible]*ch.* We shall never fall out about an execution. [illegible] to that article, pray how stands your last year's [illegible]nt?

[illegible]*kit.* If you will run your eye over it, you'll find [illegible]r and clearly stated.

[illegible]. This long arrear of the government is very [illegible]on us. Can it be expected that we should [illegible]r acquaintance for nothing, when our betters [illegible] save theirs without being paid for it? Un-

less the people in employment pay better, I promise them for the future I shall let other rogues live beside their own.

Lockit. Perhaps, brother, they are afraid those matters may be carried too far. We are treated too by them with contempt, as if our profession were not reputable.

Peach. In one respect indeed our employment may be reckoned dishonest, because, like great statesmen, we encourage those who betray their friends.

Lockit. Such language, brother, any where else might turn to your prejudice. Learn to be more guarded, I beg you.

AIR.—LOCKIT.

"How happy are we," &c.

When you censure the age,
Be cautious and sage,
Lest the courtiers offended should be;
If you mention vice or bribe,
'Tis so pat to all the tribe,
Each cries—That was levell'd at me.

Peach. Here's poor Ned Clincher's name, I s[illegible] sure, brother Lockit, there was a little unfair proc[illegible] ing in Ned's case; for he told me in the gonde[illegible] hold, that, for value received, you had promised session or two longer without molestation.

Lockit. Mr Peachum—this is the first time honour was ever called in question.

Peach. Business is at an end—if once we ac[illegible] honourably.

Lockit. Who accuses me?

Peach. You are warm, brother.

Lockit. He that attacks my honour, attac[illegible] likelihood——and this usage—sir—is not to

Peach. Since you provoke me to speak—I must tell you too, that Mrs Coaxer charges you with defrauding her of her information money for the apprehending of Curl-pated Hugh. Indeed, indeed, brother, we must punctually pay our spies, or we shall have no information.

Lockit. Is this language to me, sirrah—who have saved you from the gallows, sirrah!

[*Collaring each other.*

Peach. If I am hanged, it shall be for ridding the orld of an arrant rascal.

Lockit. This hand shall do the office of the halter you deserve, and throttle you——you dog!

Peach. Brother, brother—we are both in the wrong —we shall be both losers in the dispute——for you know we have it in our power to hang each other. You should not be so passionate.

Lockit. Nor you so provoking.

Luc *ch.* 'Tis our mutual interest, 'tis for the interest world, we should agree. If I said any thing, we ner, to the prejudice of your character, I ask pardon.

Lockit. Brother Peachum—I can forgive as well as esent——Give me your hand; suspicion does not become a friend.

Peach. I only meant to give you occasion to justify *Lockit* self. But I must now step home, for I expect agreeable gentleman about this snuff-box that Filch nimmed heath ights ago in the Park. I appointed him at this *Pear.* [*Exit.*

But as

accou *Enter* LUCY.

Loc 'tis fa *ockit.* Whence come you, hussy?

Peachy. My tears might answer that question.

hard up *kit.* You have been whimpering and fondling hang ou spaniel, over the fellow that hath abused you. will hardly

Lucy. One can't help love; one can't cure it. 'Tis not in my power to obey you and hate him.

Lockit. Learn to bear your husband's death like a reasonable woman; 'tis not the fashion now-a-days so much as to affect sorrow upon these occasions. No woman would ever marry if she had not the chance of mortality for a release. Act like a woman of spirit, hussy, and thank your father for what he is doing.

AIR.—LUCY.

"Of a noble race was Shenkin."

Is then his fate decreed, sir,
Such a man can I think of quitting?
When first we met, so moves me yet,
O see how my heart is splitting!

Lockit. Look ye, Lucy, there is no saving him—so I think you must even do like other widows—buy yourself weeds, and be cheerful.

AIR.—LOCKIT.

You'll think, ere many days ensue,
This sentence not severe;
I hang your husband, child, 'tis true,
But with him hang your care.
Twang dang dillo dee.

Like a good wife, go moan over your dying husband; that, child, is your duty—Consider, girl, you can't have the man and the money too——so make yourself as easy as you can, by getting all you can from him. [*Exit.*

Enter MACHEATH.

Lucy. Though the ordinary was out of the way

to-day, I hope, my dear, you will, upon the first opportunity, quiet my scruples.—Oh, sir! my father's hard heart is not to be softened, and I am in the utmost despair.

Mac. But if I could raise a small sum——would not twenty guineas, think you, move him?—Of all the arguments in the way of business, the perquisite is the most prevailing.—Money, well-timed, and properly applied, will do any thing.

Lucy. What love or money can do shall be done; for all my comfort depends upon your safety.

Enter POLLY.

Polly. Where is my dear husband?—Was a rope ever intended for this neck!——Oh let me throw my arms about it, and throttle thee with love!—Why dost thou turn away from me?—'tis thy Polly—'tis thy wife.

Mac. Was ever such an unfortunate rascal as I am!

Lucy. Was there ever such another villain!

Polly. Oh, Macheath! was it for this we parted? Taken! imprisoned! tried! hanged!—Cruel reflection! I'll stay with thee till death——no force shall tear thy dear wife from thee now.—What means my love?—not one kind word! not one kind look!—Think what thy Polly suffers to see thee in this condition!

Mac. I must disown her. [*Aside.*] The wench is distracted!

Lucy. Am I then bilked of my virtue? Can I have no reparation? Sure men were born to lie, and woman to believe them! Oh villain! villain!

Polly. Am I not thy wife?—Thy neglect of me, thy aversion to me, too severely proves it.—Look on me—Tell me, am I not thy wife?

Lucy. Perfidious wretch!

Polly. Barbarous husband!

Lucy. Hadst thou been hanged five months ago, I had been happy.

Polly. If you had been kind to me till death, it would not have vexed me—and that's no very unreasonable request (though from a wife) to a man who hath not above seven or eight days to live.

Lucy. Art thou, then, married to another? Hast thou two wives, monster?

Mac. If woman's tongues can cease for an answer —hear me.

Lucy. I won't.—Flesh and blood can't bear my usage!

Polly. Shall not I claim my own? Justice bids me speak.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

"Have you heard of a frolicsome ditty."

How happy could I be with either,
Were t'other dear charmer away!
But, while ye thus tease me together,
To neither a word will I say;
But toll de roll, &c.

Polly. Sure, my dear, there ought to be some preference shown to a wife—at least she may claim the appearance of it. He must be distracted with misfortunes, or he could not use me thus.

Lucy. Oh villain! villain! thou hast deceived me! —I could even inform against thee with pleasure.— Not a prude wishes more heartily to have facts against her intimate acquaintance, than I now wish to have facts against thee. I would have her satisfaction, and they should all out.

AIR.

"Irish trot."

Polly. *I'm bubbled.*
Lucy. *I'm bubbled.*
Polly. *Oh, how I'm troubled!*
Lucy. *Bamboozled and bit!*
Polly. *My distresses are doubled.*
Lucy. *When you come to the tree, should the hangman refuse,*
These fingers, with pleasure, could fasten the noose.
Polly. *I'm bubbled, &c.*

Mac. Be pacified, my dear Lucy—this is all a fetch of Polly's, to make me desperate with you, in case I get off. If I am hanged, she would fain have the credit of being thought my widow.—Really, Polly, this is no time for a dispute of this sort; for whenever you are talking of marriage, I am thinking of hanging.

Polly. And hast thou the heart to persist in disowning me?

Mac. And hast thou the heart to persist in persuading me that I am married? Why, Polly, dost thou seek to aggravate my misfortunes?

Lucy. Really, Miss Peachum, you do but expose yourself; besides, 'tis barbarous in you to worry a gentleman in his circumstances.

AIR.—POLLY.

Cease your fibbing,
Force or cunning
Never shall my heart trepan;
All these sallies
Are but malice,
To seduce my constant man.

'Tis most certain,
By their flirting,
Women oft have envy shown;
Pleased to ruin
Others' wooing,
Never happy in their own!

Decency, madam, methinks, might teach you to behave yourself with some reserve to the husband, while his wife is present.

Mac. But, seriously, Polly, this is carrying the joke a little too far.

Lucy. If you are determined, madam, to raise a disturbance in the prison, I shall be obliged to send for the turnkey, to show you the door. I am sorry, madam, you force me to be so ill bred.

Polly. Give me leave to tell you, madam, these forward airs don't become you in the least, madam; and my duty, madam, obliges me to stay with my husband, madam.

AIR.

"Good morrow, Gossip Joan."

Lucy. *Why, how now, Madam Flirt?*
If you thus must chatter,
And are for flinging dirt,
Let's try who best can spatter,
Madam Flirt!

Polly. *Why, how now, saucy jade?*
Sure the wench is tipsey!
How can you see me made [To him.
The scoff of such a gipsy?
Saucy jade! [To her.

Enter PEACHUM.

Peach. Where's my wench? Ah, hussy, hussy!—Come home, you slut! and when your fellow is hanged, hang yourself, to make your family some amends.

Polly. Dear, dear father! do not tear me from him.—I must speak—I have more to say to him.—Oh, twist thy fetters about me, that he may not haul me from thee!

Peach. Sure, all women are alike! if ever they commit one folly, they are sure to commit another, by exposing themselves.—Away—not a word more.—You are my prisoner, now, hussy.

AIR.—POLLY.

"Irish howl."

No pow'r on earth can e'er divide
The knot that sacred love hath tied,
When parents draw against our mind,
The true love's knot they faster bind.
Oh, oh, ray, oh Amborah—Oh, oh, &c.

[*Holding* MACHEATH, PEACHUM *pulling her.*—[*Exeunt* PEACHUM *and* POLLY.

Mac. I am naturally compassionate, wife, so that I could not use the wench as she deserved, which made you, at first, suspect there was something in what she said.

Lucy. Indeed, my dear, I was strangely puzzled!

Mac. If that had been the case, her father would never have brought me into this circumstance—No, Lucy, I had rather die than be false to thee!

Lucy. How happy am I, if you say this from your heart! for I love thee so, that I could sooner bear to see thee hanged, than in the arms of another.

Mac. But couldst thou bear to see me hanged?

Lucy. Oh, Macheath! I could never live to see that day!

Mac. You see, Lucy, in the account of love, you are in my debt.—Make me, if possible, love thee more, and let me owe my life to thee—If you refuse to assist me, Peachum, and your father, will immediately put me beyond all means of escape.

Lucy. My father, I know, hath been drinking hard with the prisoners, and, I fancy, he is now taking his nap in his own room—If I can procure the keys, shall I go off with thee, my dear?

Mac. If we are together, 'twill be impossible to lie concealed. As soon as the search begins to be a little cool, I will send to thee; till then, my heart is thy prisoner.

Lucy. Come then, my dear husband, owe thy life to me; and, though you love me not, be grateful.—But that Polly runs in my head strangely.

Mac. A moment of time may make us unhappy for ever.

AIR.—LUCY.

"The Lass of Patie's Mill."

I like the fox shall grieve,
Whose mate hath left her side;
Whom hounds, from morn to eve,
Chase o'er the country wide.
Where can my lover hide?
Where cheat the wary pack?
If love be not his guide,
He never will come back. [Exeunt.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

Newgate.

LOCKIT, LUCY.

Lockit. To be sure, wench, you must have been aiding and abetting to help him to this escape?

Lucy. Sir, here hath been Peachum, and his daughter Polly, and, to be sure, they know the ways of Newgate as well as if they had been born and bred in the place all their lives. Why must all your suspicion light upon me?

Lockit. Lucy, Lucy, I will have none of these shuffling answers!

Lucy. Well then, if I know any thing of him, I wish I may be burned!

Lockit. Keep your temper, Lucy, or I shall pronounce you guilty.

Lucy. Keep yours, sir—I do wish I may be burned, I do, and what can I say more to convince you?

Lockit. Did he tip handsomely?—How much did he come down with? Come, hussy, don't cheat your father, and I shall not be angry with you—Perhaps, you have made a better bargain with him than I could have done—How much, my good girl?

Lucy. You know, sir, I am fond of him, and would have given money to have kept him with me.

Lockit. Ah, Lucy! thy education might have put thee more upon thy guard: for a girl in the bar of an ale-house, is always besieged.

Lucy. If you can forgive me, sir, I will make a fair confession; for, to be sure, he hath been a most barbarous villain to me!

Lockit. And so, you have let him escape, hussy—have you?

Lucy. When a woman loves, a kind look, a tender word, can persuade her to any thing, and I could ask no other bribe. Notwithstanding all he swore, I am now fully convinced, that Polly Peachum is actually his wife—Did I let him escape, fool that I was! to go to her? Polly will wheedle herself into his money; and then Peachum will hang him, and cheat us both.

Lockit. So I am to be ruined, because, forsooth, you must be in love!—A very pretty excuse!

Lucy. I could murder that impudent, happy strumpet!—I gave him his life, and that creature enjoys the sweets of it—Ungrateful Macheath!

AIR.—LUCY.

"South Sea Ballad."

My love is all madness and folly;
Alone I lie,
Toss, tumble, and cry,
What a happy creature is Polly!
Was e'er such a wretch as I?
With rage, I redden like scarlet,
That my dear inconstant varlet,
Stark blind to my charms,
Is lost in the arms
Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot!
Stark blind to my charms,
Is lost in the arms
Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot!
This, this my resentment alarms.

Lockit. And so, after all this mischief, I must stay here to be entertained with your caterwauling, Mistress Puss!—Out of my sight, wanton strumpet!—You shall fast, and mortify yourself into reason, with, now and then, a little handsome discipline, to bring you to your senses.—Go!—[*Exit* Lucy.] Peachum.

then, intends to outwit me in this affair, but I'll be even with him!—The dog is leaky in his liquor, so I'll ply him that way, get the secret from him, and turn this affair to my own advantage. Lucy!

Enter LUCY.

Are there any of Peachum's people now in the house?

Lucy. Filch, sir, is drinking a quartern of strong waters, in the next room, with Black Moll.

Lockit. Bid him come to me. [*Exit.*

Enter FILCH.

Why, boy, thou lookest as if thou wert half starved, —like a shotten herring.—But, boy, canst thou tell me where thy master is to be found?

Filch. At his lock, sir, at the Crooked Billet.

Lockit. Very well—I have nothing more with you. [*Exit* FILCH.] I'll go to him there, for I have many important affairs to settle with him, and in the way of those transactions, I'll artfully get into his secret—so that Macheath shall not remain a day longer out of my clutches. [*Exit.*

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Jealousy, rage, love, and fear, are at once tearing me to pieces. How am I weather-beaten and shattered with distresses!

AIR.—LUCY.

"One evening having lost my way."

I'm like a skiff on the ocean tost,
Now high, now low, with each billow borne,
With her rudder broke and her anchor lost,
Deserted and all forlorn.
While thus I lie rolling and tossing all night,
That Polly lies sporting on seas of delight!
Revenge, revenge, revenge,
Shall appease my restless sprite.

I have the ratsbane ready——I run no risk; for I can lay her death upon the gin, and so many die of that naturally, that I shall never be called in question—But say I were to be hanged—I never could be hanged for any thing that would give me greater comfort than the poisoning that slut.

Enter FILCH.

Filch. Madam, here's Miss Polly come to wait upon you.

Lucy. Show her in.

Enter POLLY.

Dear madam! your servant.—I hope you will pardon my passion when I was so happy to see you last—I was so overrun with the spleen, that I was perfectly out of myself; and really when one hath the spleen, every thing is to be excused by a friend.

AIR.—LUCY.

"Now, Roger, I'll tell thee, because thou'rt my son"

When a wife's in the pout,
(As she's sometimes, no doubt)
The good husband, as meek as a lamb,
Her vapours to still,
First grants her her will,
And the quieting draught is a dram;
Poor man! and the quieting draught is a dram.

—I wish all our quarrels might have so comfortable a reconciliation.

Polly. I have no excuse for my own behaviour, madam, but my misfortunes—and really, madam, I suffer too upon your account.

Lucy. But, Miss Polly—in the way of friendship will you give me leave to propose a glass of cordial to you?

Polly. Strong waters are apt to give me the head-ache.—I hope, madam, you will excuse me?

Lucy. Not the greatest lady in the land could have better in her closet for her own private drinking.—You seem mighty low in spirits, my dear!

Polly. I am sorry, madam, my health will not allow me to accept of your offer——I should not have left you in the rude manner I did when we met last, madam, had not my papa hauled me away so unexpectedly.—I was indeed somewhat provoked, and perhaps might use some expressions that were disrespectful—but really, madam, the captain treated me with so much contempt and cruelty, that I deserved our pity rather than your resentment.

Lucy. But since his escape, no doubt, all matters are made up again——Ah Polly! Polly! 'tis I am the unhappy wife, and he loves you as if you were only his mistress.

Polly. Sure, madam, you cannot think me so happy as to be the object of your jealousy——A man is always afraid of a woman who loves him too well—So what I must expect to be neglected and avoided.

Lucy. Then our cases, my dear Polly, are exactly alike: both of us indeed have been too fond. Indeed, my dear Polly, we are both of us a cup too low; let me prevail upon you to accept of my offer.

AIR.—LUCY.

"Come, sweet lass."

Come, sweet lass,
Let's banish sorrow
Till to-morrow;
Come, sweet lass,
Let's take a chirping glass.
Wine can clear
The vapours of despair,
And make us light as air;
Then drink and banish care.

I can't bear, child, to see you in such low spirits—and I must persuade you to what I know will do you good——I shall now soon be even with the hypocritical strumpet. [*Aside.—Exit.*

Polly. All this wheedling of Lucy can't be for nothing—at this time too, when I know she hates me! —The dissembling of a woman is always the forerunner of mischief—By pouring strong waters down my throat she thinks to pump some secrets out of me —I'll be upon my guard, and won't taste a drop of her liquor, I'm resolved.

Enter LUCY, *with strong Waters.*

Lucy. Come, Miss Polly.

Polly. Indeed, child, you have given yourself trouble to no purpose—You must, my dear, excuse me.

Lucy. Really, Miss Polly, you are as squeamishly affected about taking a cup of strong waters as a lady before company. I vow, Polly, I shall take it monstrously ill if you refuse me.

Polly. I protest, madam, it goes against me—— What do I see! Macheath again in custody!—now every glimmering of happiness is lost!

[*Drops the Glass of Liquor on the Ground.*

Enter LOCKIT, MACHEATH, *and* PEACHUM.

Lockit. Set your heart at rest, captain——You have neither the chance of love or money for another escape, for you are ordered to be called down upon your trial immediately.

Peach. Away, hussies!——This is not a time for a man to be hampered with his wives——you see the gentleman is in chains already.

Lucy. O husband, husband! my heart longed to see thee, but to see thee thus distracts me!

Polly. Will not my dear husband look upon his Polly? Why hadst thou not flown to me for protection? with me thou hadst been safe.

AIR.

"The last time I came o'er the moor."

Polly. *Hither, dear husband, turn your eyes!*
Lucy. *Bestow one glance to cheer me.*
Polly. *Think, with that look, thy Polly dies.*
Lucy. *Oh, shun me not, but hear me!*
Polly. *'Tis Polly sues.*
Lucy *'Tis Lucy speaks.*
Polly. *Is thus true love requited?*
Lucy. *My heart is bursting.*
Polly. *Mine, too, breaks.*
Lucy. *Must I——*
Polly. *Must I be slighted?*

Mac. What would you have me say, ladies? You see the affair will soon be at an end, without my disobliging either of you.

Peach. But the settling of this point, Captain, might prevent a law-suit between your two widows.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

"Tom Tinker's my true love," &c.

Which way shall I turn me? how can I decide?
Wives, the day of your death, are as fond as a bride.
One wife is too much for most husbands to hear,
But two at a time, there's no mortal can bear.
This way and that way, and which way I will,
What would comfort the one, t'other wife would take ill.

Polly. But, if his own misfortunes have made him insensible to mine, a father, sure, will be more compassionate!—Dear, dear sir! sink the material evidence, and bring him off at his trial—Polly, upon her knees, begs it of you.

AIR.—POLLY.

"I am a poor shepherd, undone."

When my hero in court appears,
And stands arraign'd for his life,
Then think of poor Polly's tears,
For ah! poor Polly's his wife.
Like the sailor, he holds up his hand,
Distress'd on the dashing wave;
To die a dry death at land
Is as bad as a wat'ry grave.
And alas, poor Polly!
Alack, and well-a-day!
Before I was in love,
Oh! ev'ry month was May.

Peach. Set your heart at rest, Polly—your husband is to die to-day; therefore, if you are not already provided, 'tis high time to look about for another.—There's comfort for you, you slut!

Lockit. We are ready, sir, to conduct you to the Old Bailey.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

"Bonny Dundee."

The charge is prepared, the lawyers are met,
The judges all ranged; (a terrible show!)
I go undismay'd, for death is a debt—
A debt on demand, so take what I owe.
Then farewell, my love—dear charmers, adieu!
[illegible] *er for you.*
[illegible] *rest of our li[illegible]es,*
[illegible] *e all my wives.*

[illegible] o attend you.

[illegible] KIT, MACHEATH, &c.

SCENE II.

The condemned Hold.

MACHEATH *in a melancholy Posture.*

AIR.

" Happy Groves."

Oh, cruel, cruel, cruel case!
Must I suffer this disgrace?

AIR.

" Of all the girls that are so smart."

Of all the friends in time of grief,
When threat'ning death looks grimmer,
Not one so sure can bring relief,
As this best friend, a brimmer. [Drinks.

AIR.

" Britons, strike home.

Since I must swing—I scorn, I scorn to wince or whine. [Rises.

AIR.

" Chevy Chace."

But now again, my spirits sink,
I'll raise them high with wine.
[Drinks a Glass of Wine.

AIR.

" To old Sir Simon the king."

But valour the stronger grows,
The stronger liquor we're drinking,
And how can we feel our woes,
When we've lost the trouble of thinking?
[Drinks.

AIR.

" Joy to great Cæsar."

If thus a man can die,
Much bolder with brandy.
[Pours out a Bumper of Brandy.

AIR.

re was an old woman," &c.

s bumper—and now I can stand the test,
es shall see that I die as brave as the best.
[Drinks.

AIR.

ever hear of a gallant sailor?"

But can I leave my pretty hussies
Without one tear, or tender sigh?

AIR.

" Why are mine eyes thus flowing?"

Their eyes, their lips, their busses,
Recal my love—Ah! must I die?

AIR.

"Green Sleeves."

Since laws were made for every degree,
To curb vice in others, as well as in me,
I wonder we ha'n't better company
Upon Tyburn tree.
But gold from law can take out the sting;
And if rich men, like us, were to swing,
'Twould thin the land, such numbers to string
Upon Tyburn tree.

Enter GAOLER.

Gaoler. Some friends of yours, Captain, desire to be admitted—I leave you together. [*Exit.*

Enter BEN BUDGE *and* MAT *of the* MINT.

Mac. For my having broke prison, you see, gentlemen, I am ordered immediate execution—The sheriff's officers, I believe, are now at the door. That Jemmy Twitcher should 'peach me, I own surprised me—'Tis a plain proof that the world is all alike, and that even our gang can no more trust one another than other people; therefore, I beg you, gentlemen, to look well to yourselves, for, in all probability, you may live some months longer.

Mat. We are all heartily sorry, Captain, for your misfortune, but 'tis what we must all come to.

Mac. Peachum and Lockit, you know, are infamous scoundrels—their lives are as much in your power, as yours are in theirs—Remember your dying friend—'Tis my last request—Bring those villains to the gallows before you, and I am satisfied.

Mat. We'll do it.

Enter GAOLER.

Gaoler. Miss Polly and Miss Lucy entreat a word with you. [*Exit.*

Mac. Gentlemen, adieu!

[*Exeunt* BEN BUDGE *and* MAT *of the* MINT.

Enter LUCY *and* POLLY.

Mac. My dear Lucy! my dear Polly! whatsoever hath passed between us is now at an end.

AIR.

"All you that must take a leap," &c.

Lucy. *'Would I might be hang'd!*
Polly. *And I would so too!*
Lucy. *To be hang'd with you,*
Polly. *My dear, with you.*
Mac. *Oh, leave me to th' ught! I fear, I doubt!*
I tremble—I droop!—See, my courage is out!
[Turns up the empty pot.
Polly. *No token of love?*
Mac. *See, my courage is out!*
[Turns up the empty bottle.
Lucy. *No token of love?*
Polly. *Adieu!*
Lucy. *Farewell!*
Mac. *But hark! I hear the toll of the bell.*
Chorus. *Tol de rol lol, &c.*

Gaoler. Four women more, Captain, with a child

ILDREN.

this is too mu.

ready. [*Exeun.*

a reprieve!

Enter MACHEATH, *&c.*

Mac. So, it seems, I am not left to my choice, but must have a wife at last—Look ye, my dears, we will have no controversy now—Let us give this day to mirth, and I am sure she, who thinks herself my wife, will testify her joy by a dance.

All. Come, a dance! a dance!

Mac. Ladies, I hope you will give me leave to present a partner to each of you; and (if I may without offence) for this time, I take Polly for mine—and for life, you slut, for we are really married—As for the rest—But, at present, keep your own secret.

[*To* POLLY.

A DANCE.

AIR.

"Lumps of pudding," &c.

Thus, I stand like a Turk, and his doxies around,
From all sides, their glances his passion confound;
For black, brown, and fair, his [illegible] fancy burns,
And the different beauties subdue him by turns:
Each calls forth her charms, to provoke his desires,
Though willing to all, but with one he retires:
Then think of this maxim, and put off all sorrow,
The wretch of to-day may be happy to-morrow.

CHORUS.

Then think of this maxim, &c. [Exeunt omnes.

THE END.

MIRANDA.— AND FROM THAT FATAL NIGHT I
LOVED YOU —
&c. &c. &c.

PAINTED BY W. M. CRAIG. PUBLISHED BY LONGMAN & CO.

THE

BUSY BODY;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

By Mrs. CENTLIVRE.

As performed at the Theatres Royal

DRURY LANE AND COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

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REMARKS.

When a man follows the occupation of a woman, or a woman the employment of a man, they are both unpleasing characters, if they are guided in their pursuits by choice. But, if necessity has ruled their destinies, they are surely objects of compassion; and mercy should be granted to their want of skill in their irregular departments.

The female author of "The Busy Body," was driven to a poet's calling, by the hardships of her fate.

Mrs. Centlivre's father, was the possessor of a considerable estate at Holbeach, in Lincolnshire, at the time of the restoration; but, as he was a zealous dissenter, he was, of course, persecuted for the political opinions which adhered to this church: his estate was at length confiscated, and he, with his family, obliged to seek refuge in Ireland.

The authoress of this play was at twelve years of age an orphan: and at fifteen, being persecuted on account of her poverty and her beauty, as much as her father had been for his religious and republican principles, she pursued his example; and, flying from her enemies, took shelter in England. England had not the virtue to protect her, either from want or from dishonour. A student of Cambridge met her, a forlorn traveller, on her way to London; and this

young man, being of an engaging mind and person, prevailed on her (destitute as she was) to accompany him to the university in man's attire, as his companion and friend.

The haste, with which this intimacy was formed, was but the forerunner of as hasty [illegible] however, remained long enough [illegible] learn experience, and to improve [illegible] rature.

The Biographers of Mrs. Centlivre [illegible] where she met with her second lover; but it [illegible] she had the prudence to make him her husband: She had the affliction, likewise, to be a widow, before she was eighteen.

Her deceased husband was a gentleman, and the nephew of Sir Stephen Fox. Her next husband was also a gentleman;—for she married, not long after her widowhood, a Mr. Carrol, who was killed in a duel the year following;—and, once more, she became a widow.

It was now discreet to think on other support than such as had depended on the lives of two young husbands, who, having offended their family by a contract of marriage, the mere effect of love, had, on their demise, left their relict in the most indigent circumstances. Mrs. Carrol became an actress;—but, notwithstanding her youth, her wit, and her beauty, she was unsuccessful in that profession.

To avoid the alternative, female profligacy, or domestic drudgery, she now encountered the masculine enterprise of an author. She wrote eighteen plays, of

which, three will preserve her memory:—these are, "The Wonder," "Bold Stroke for a wife," and the present comedy.

In this period of her writing, (and, no doubt, its concomitant, fasting,)—the reader will not be surprised that Mrs. Carrol should marry a third time.—She now united herself to a man, whose very title promised her protection from that ancient and modern visitation upon authors, denominated—hunger. Mr. Centlivre was "yeoman to the mouth," or principal cook to queen Anne. Mrs. Centlivre's forecast in these her last nuptials did her judgment more honour than her ambition. She died in 1723, of a disorder, neither so lingering, nor so painful, as starving.

This comedy of the "Busy Body," which has survived one hundred years, was, by the actors, who performed in it, expected to die on the first night.

The foresight of actors, in regard to the success of new dramas, has been long out of credit—unjustly so—for, although their predictions are not infallible, actors are as frequently prophetic, upon the life and death of a play, as the physician upon that of his patient.

The part of Marplot is the sole support of this comedy.—A most powerful protector in all, that original character can give. The busy curiosity, the officious good temper, and the sheepish cowardice, of this mean atom of human nature, are so excellently delineated, that he allures the attention and expectation of the auditors, and makes them bear with pa-

tience, the dull, and common place dramatic persons which surround him.

Authors of the past time, and those of the present, have had very different notions of the ties which subsist between parents and children. It is shocking to see how tyranny on one part, and deceit on the other, disgrace most of our old play books. It is to be hoped, that these portraits of unnatural vice have been daubed with such hideous colours, they have reclaimed all fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters; and left to the writers of these days, to paint from nature —parental and filial love.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	COVENT GARDEN.	DRURY LANE.
SIR GEORGE AIRY	*Mr. Brunton.*	*Mr. Barrymore.*
SIR FRANCIS GRIPE	*Mr. Munden.*	*Mr. Dowton.*
SIR JEALOUS TRAFFIC	*Mr. Emery.*	*Mr. Dormer.*
CHARLES	*Mr. Claremont.*	*Mr. Holland.*
MARPLOT	*Mr. Lewis.*	*Mr. Bannister.*
WHISPER	*Mr. Farley.*	*Mr. De Camp.*
WILLIAM	*Mr. Harley.*	
THOMAS	*Mr. Abbot.*	
JAMES	*Mr. Truman.*	
FRANK	*Mr. Lewiss.*	
HARRY	*Mr. Platt.*	
MIRANDA	*Mrs. Glover.*	*Miss Duncan.*
ISABINDA	*Mrs. Beverly.*	*Mrs. Scott.*
SCENTWELL	*Miss Cox.*	*Miss Tidswell.*
PATCH	*Mrs. Mattocks.*	*Miss Pope.*

THE

BUSY BODY.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

The Park.

SIR GEORGE AIRY *meeting* CHARLES.

Cha. Ha! Sir George Airy a birding thus early! what forbidden game roused you so soon? for no lawful occasion could invite a person of your figure abroad, at such unfashionable hours.

Sir Geo. There are some men, Charles, whom fortune has left free from inquietudes, who are diligently studious to find out ways and means to make themselves uneasy.

Cha. Is it possible that any thing in nature can ruffle the temper of a man, whom the four seasons of the year compliment with as many thousand pounds, nay, and a father at rest with his ancestors?

Sir Geo. Why, there it is now! A man that wants money, thinks none can be unhappy that has it; but my affairs are in such a whimsical posture, that it will

require a calculation of my nativity, to find if my gold will relieve me or not.

Cha. Ha, ha, ha! never consult the stars about that; gold has a power beyond them. Then what can thy business be, that gold won't serve thee in?

Sir Geo. Why, I'm in love.

Cha. In love!——Ha, ha, ha, ha! in love!——Ha, ha, ha, ha! with what, pr'ythee? a cherubine?

Sir Geo. No, with a woman.

Cha. A woman! good. Ha, ha, ha, ha! and gold not help thee?

Sir Geo. But suppose I'm in love with two——

Cha. Ay, if thou'rt in love with two hundred, gold will fetch them, I warrant thee, boy. But who are they? who are they? come.

Sir Geo. One is a lady whose face I never saw, but witty to a miracle; the other, beautiful as Venus——

Cha. And a fool——

Sir Geo. For aught I know; for I never spoke to her; but you can inform me. I am charmed by the wit of the one, and die for the beauty of the other.

Cha. And pray which are you in quest of now?

Sir Geo. I prefer the sensual pleasure; I'm for her I've seen, who is thy father's ward, Miranda.

Cha. Nay, then I pity you; for the Jew, my father, will no more part with her, and thirty thousand pounds, than he would with a guinea to keep me from starving.

Sir Geo. Now, you see, gold can't do every thing, Charles.

Cha. Yes, for 'tis her gold that bars my father's gate against you.

Sir Geo. Why, if he be this avaricious wretch, how cam'st thou by such a liberal education?

Cha. Not a souse out of his pocket, I assure you: I had an uncle who defrayed that charge; but for some little wildnesses of youth, though he made me his heir, left dad my guardian till I came to years of discretion,

which I presume the old gentleman will never think I am; and now he has got the estate into his clutches, it does me no more good than if it lay in Prester John's dominions.

Sir. Geo. What, canst thou find no stratagem to redeem it?

Cha. I have made many essays to no purpose; though want, the mistress of invention, still tempts me on, yet still the old fox is too cunning for me.—I am upon my last project, which, if it fails, then for my last refuge—a brown musket.

Sir Geo. What is't?—Can I assist thee?

Cha. Not yet; when you can, I have confidence enough in you to ask it.

Sir Geo. I am always ready. But what does he intend to do with Miranda? is she to be sold in private, or will he put her up by way of auction, at who bids most? if so, egad, I'm for him; my gold, as you say, shall be subservient to my pleasure.

Cha. To deal ingenuously with you, Sir George, I know very little of her or home; for, since my uncle's death, and my return from travel, I have never been well with my father; he thinks my expenses too great, and I his allowance too little; he never sees me, but he quarrels, and to avoid that, I shun his house as much as possible. The report is, he intends to marry her himself.

Sir Geo. Can she consent to it?

Cha. Yes, faith, so they say: but I tell you, I am wholly ignorant of the matter. I fancy she plays the mother-in-law already, and sets the old gentleman on to do mischief.

Sir Geo. Then I have your free consent to get her?

Cha. Ay, and my helping hand, if occasion be.

Sir Geo. Poh! yonder's a fool coming this way; let's avoid him. [MARPLOT *sings behind.*

Cha. What, Marplot? No, no, he's my instrument;

there's a thousand conveniences in him; he'll lend me his money, when he has any; run of my errands, and be proud on it; in short, he'll pimp for me, lie for me, drink for me, do any thing but fight for me, and that I trust to my own arm for.

Sir Geo. Nay, then he's to be endured; I never knew his qualifications before.

Enter MARPLOT, *with a Patch on his Face.*

Mar. Dear Charles, yours—Ha! Sir George Airy! —the man in the world I have an ambition to be known to! [*Aside.*] Give me thy hand, dear boy.

Cha. A good assurance! But harkye, how came your beautiful countenance clouded in the wrong place?

Mar. I must confess, 'tis a little *mal-a-propos;* but no matter for that. A word with you, Charles. Pr'ythee, introduce me to Sir George—he is a man of wit, and I'd give ten guineas to——

Cha. When you have them, you mean.

Mar. Ay, when I have them; pugh, pox, you cut the thread of my discourse——I would give ten guineas. I say, to be ranked in his acquaintance. But, pr'ythee, introduce me.

Cha. Well, on condition you'll give us a true account how you came by that mourning nose, I will.

Mar. I'll do it.

Cha. Sir George, here's a gentleman has a passionate desire to kiss your hand.

Sir Geo. Oh, I honour men of the sword! and I presume, this gentleman is lately come from the wars, by his scars.

Mar. No, really, Sir George, mine sprung from civil fury. Happening last night into the groom porter's—I had a strong inclination to go ten guineas with a sort of a, sort of a—kind of a milksop, as I

thought. A pox of the dice! he flung out, and my pockets being empty, as Charles knows they often are, he proved a surly North Briton, and broke my face for my deficiency.

Sir Geo. Ha, ha!—and did not you draw?

Mar. Draw, sir!—why, I did but lay my hand upon my sword, to make a swift retreat, and he roared out, "Now, the deel a ma sal, sir, gin ye touch yer steel, Ise whip mine through yer weam."

Sir Geo. Ha, ha, ha!

Cha. Ha, ha, ha, ha! Safe was the word. So you walked off, I suppose?

Mar. Yes, for I avoid fighting, purely to be serviceable to my friends, you know——

Sir Geo. Your friends are much obliged to you, sir: I hope you'll rank me in that number.

Mar. Sir George, a bow from the side box, or to be seen in your chariot, binds me ever yours.

Sir Geo. Trifles; you may command them when you please.

Cha. Provided, he may command you.

Mar. Me! why, I live for no other purpose——Sir George, I have the honour to be caressed by most of the reigning toasts of the town: I'll tell them, you are the finest gentleman——

Sir Geo. No, no, pr'ythee let me alone to tell the ladies—my parts.—Can you convey a letter upon occasion, or deliver a message with an air of business, ha?

Mar. With the assurance of a page, and the gravity of a statesman.

Sir Geo. You know Miranda?

Mar. What! my sister ward? why, her guardian is mine; we are fellow sufferers. Ah, he is a covetous, cheating, sanctified curmudgeon: that Sir Francis Gripe is a damn'd old—hypocritical——

Cha. Hold, hold; I suppose, friend, you forget that he is my father?

Mar. Egad, and so I did, Charles—I ask your pardon, Charles, but it is for your sake I hate him. Well, I say the world is mistaken in him; his outside piety makes him every man's executor, and his inside cunning makes him every heir's gaoler. Egad, Charles, I'm half persuaded that thou'rt some ward too, and never of his getting—for never were two things so unlike, as you and your father: he scrapes up every thing, and thou spend'st every thing; every body is indebted to him, and thou art indebted to every body.

Sir Geo. A pleasant fellow.

Cha. The dog is diverting sometimes, or there would be no enduring his impertinence. He is pressing to be employed, and willing to execute; but some ill fate generally attends all he undertakes, and he oftener spoils an intrigue than helps it.

Mar. But, if I miscarry, 'tis none of my fault; I follow my instructions.

Cha. Yes, witness the merchant's wife.

Mar. Pish, pox! that was an accident.

Sir Geo. What was it, pr'ythee?

Mar. Nay, Charles, now don't expose your friend.

Cha. Why, you must know, I had lent a certain merchant my hunting horses, and was to have met his wife in his absence. Sending him along with my groom to make the compliment, and to deliver a letter to the lady at the same time, what does he do, but gives the husband the letter, and offers her the horses!

Mar. Why, to be sure, I did offer her the horses, and I remember you was even with me, for you denied the letter to be yours, and swore I had a design upon her, which my bones paid for.

Cha. Come, Sir George, let's walk round, if you are not engaged, for I have sent my man upon a little earnest business, and I have ordered him to bring me the answer into the Park.

Mar. Business! and I not know it! Egad, I'll watch him.

Sir Geo. I must beg your pardon, Charles, I am to meet your father.

Cha. My father!

Sir Geo. Ay, and about the oddest bargain, perhaps, you ever heard of; but I'll not impart till I know the success.

Mar. What can his business be with Sir Francis? Now would I give all the world to know it. Why the devil should not one know every man's concerns! [*Aside.*

Cha. Prosperity to't, whate'er it be: I have private affairs too: over a bottle we'll compare notes.

Mar. Charles knows I love a glass as well as any man; I'll make one; shall it be to-night?—Add, I long to know their secrets. [*Aside.*

Enter WHISPER.

Whisp. Sir, sir, Mrs. Patch says, Isabinda's Spanish father has quite spoiled the plot, and she can't meet you in the Park; but he infallibly will go out this afternoon, she says: but I must step again to know the hour.

Mar. What did Whisper say now? I shall go stark mad, if I'm not let into the secret. [*Aside.*

Cha. Curst misfortune!

Mar. Curst! what's curst, Charles?

Cha. Come along with me, my heart feels pleasure at her name. Sir George, yours; we'll meet at the old place, the usual hour.

Sir Geo. Agreed. I think I see Sir Francis yonder. [*Exit.*

Cha. Marplot, you must excuse me; I am engag'd. [*Exit.*

Mar. Engaged! Egad, I'll engage my life I'll know what your engagement is. [*Exit.*

MIRANDA *is brought in, in a Chair.*

Miran. [*Coming from the Chair.*] Let the [illegible] —My servant, that dogged Sir George, [illegible] in the Park.

Enter PATCH.

Ha! Miss Patch alone! Did you not tell me [illegible] contrived a way to bring Isabinda to the P[illegible]

Patch. Oh, madam, your ladyship can[illegible] what a wretched disappointment we have [illegible] Just as I had fetched a suit of my clothes [illegible] guise, comes my old master into his closet, [illegible] right against her chamber door: this struck us into a terrible fright—at length, I put on a grave face, and asked him, if he was at leisure for his chocolate? in hopes to draw him out of his hole: but he snapped my nose off: "No, I shall be busy here these two hours." At which, my poor mistress, seeing no way of escape, ordered me to wait on your ladyship with the sad relation.

Miran. Unhappy Isabinda! was ever any thing so unaccountable as the humour of Sir Jealous Traffic.

Patch. Oh, madam, it's his living so long in Spain: he vows he'll spend half his estate, but he'll be a parliament man, on purpose to bring in a bill for women to wear veils, and other odious Spanish customs—He swears it is the height of impudence to have a woman seen barefaced even at church, and scarce believes there's a true-begotten child in the city.

Miran. Ha, ha, ha! how the old fool torments himself! Suppose he could introduce his rigid rules—does he think we could not match them in contrivance? No, no; let the tyrant man make what laws he will, if there's a woman under the government, I warrant she finds a way to break 'em. Is his mind set upon the Spaniard for his son-in-law still?

Patch. Ay, and he expects him by the next fleet, which drives his daughter to melancholy and despair. But, madam, I find you retain the same gay, cheerful spirit you had when I waited on your ladyship.—My lady is mighty good humoured too, and I have found a way to make Sir Jealous believe I am wholly in his interest, when my real design is to serve her: he makes me her gaoler, and I set her at liberty.

Miran. I knew thy prolific brain would be of singular service to her, or I had not parted with thee to her father.

Patch. But, madam, the report is, that you are going to marry your guardian.

Miran. It is necessary such a report should be, Patch.

Patch. But, is it true, madam?

Miran. That's not absolutely necessary.

Patch. I thought it was only the old strain, coaxing him still for your own, and railing at all the young fellows about town: in my mind now you are as ill plagued with your guardian, madam, as my lady is with my father.

Miran. No, I have liberty, wench; that she wants: what would she give now to be in this dishabille in the open air; nay, more, in pursuit of the young fellow she likes?—for that's my case, I assure you.

Patch. As for that, madam, she's even with you; for though she can't come abroad, we have a way to bring him home, in spite of old Argus.

Miran. Now, Patch, your opinion of my choice, for here he comes.—Ha! my guardian with him! what can be the meaning of this? I'm sure Sir Francis can't know me in this dress.——Let's observe them.

[*They withdraw.*

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE *and* SIR GEORGE AIRY.

Sir Fran. Verily, Sir George, thou wilt repent throwing away thy money so, for I tell thee sincerely, Mi-

randa, my charge, does not like a young fellow; they are all vicious, and seldom make good husbands: in sober sadness she cannot abide 'em.

Miran. [*Peeping.*] In sober sadness you are n[illegible] —What can this mean?

Sir Geo. Lookye, Sir Francis, whether she [illegible] cannot, abide young fellows, is not the busin[illegible] you take the fifty guineas?

Sir Fran. In good truth, I will not—for I k[illegible] father, he was a hearty wary man, and I cann[illegible] sent that his son should squander away what h[illegible] to no purpose.

Miran. [*Peeping.*] Now, in the name of wonde[illegible] bargain can he be driving about me for fifty gu[illegible]

Sir Geo. Well, Sir Francis, since you are so conscientious for my father's sake, then permit me the favour gratis.

Sir Fran. No verily; if thou dost not buy thy experience, thou wilt never be wise; therefore give me a hundred, and try thy fortune.

Sir Geo. The scruples arose, I find, from the scanty sum.——Let me see—a hundred guineas—[*Takes them out of a Purse, and chinks them.*] Ha! they have a very pretty sound, and a very pleasing look.—But then, Miranda—but if she should be cruel——

Miran. [*Peeping.*] As ten to one I shall——

Sir Fran. Ay, do, consider on't. He, he, he!

Sir Geo. No, I'll do't.—Come, to the point; here's the gold; sum up the conditions.—— [SIR FRANCIS, *pulling out a Paper.*

Miran. [*Peeping.*] Ay, for Heaven's sake do, for my expectation is on the rack.

Sir Fran. Well, at your peril be it.

Sir Geo. Ay, ay, go on.

Sir Fran. Imprimis, you are to be admitted into my house, in order to move your suit to Miranda, for the space of ten minutes, without let or molestation, provided I remain in the same room.

Sir Geo. But out of earshot.

Sir Fran. Well, well, I don't desire to hear what you say; ha, ha, ha! in consideration I am to have that purse and a hundred guineas.

Sir Geo. Take it—— [*Gives him the Purse.*

Miran. [*Peeping.*] So, 'tis well it's no worse: I'll fit you both——

Sir Geo. And this agreement is to be performed to-day.

Sir Fran. Ay, ay; the sooner the better. Poor fool! how Miranda and I shall laugh at him!—Well, Sir George, ha, ha, ha! take the last sound of your guineas—Ha, ha, ha! [*Chinks them.—Exit.*

Miran. [*Peeping.*] Sure he does not know I am Miranda.

Sir Geo. A very extraordinary bargain I have made, truly;—if she should be really in love with this old cuff now—Psha! that's morally impossible.——But then, what hopes have I to succeed? I never spoke to her——

Miran. [*Peeping.*] Say you so,—then I am safe.

Sir Geo. What, though my tongue never spoke, my eyes said a thousand things, and my hopes flattered me her's answered them. If I'm lucky—if not, it is but a hundred guineas thrown away——

[MIRANDA *and* PATCH *come forward.*

Miran. Upon what, Sir George?

Sir Geo. Ha! my incognita—upon a woman, madam.

Miran. They are the worst things you can deal in, and damage the soonest; your very breath destroys them, and I fear you'll never see your return, Sir George, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. Were they more brittle than china, and dropped to pieces with a touch, every atom of her I have ventured at, if she is but mistress of thy wit, balances ten times the sum.—Pr'ythee, let me see thy face.

Miran. By no means; that may spoil your opinion of my sense——

Sir Geo. Rather confirm it, madam.

Patch. So rob the lady of your gallantry, sir.

Sir Geo. No, child, a dish of chocolate in the morning, never spoils my dinner: the other lady, I design a set meal; so there's no danger.

Miran. Matrimony! ha, ha, ha! what crimes have you committed against the god of love, that he should revenge them so severely, to stamp husband on your forehead?

Sir Geo. For my folly in having so often met you here without pursuing the laws of nature, and exercising her command.—But I resolve, ere we part now, to know who you are, where you live, what kind of flesh and blood your face is; therefore, unmask, and don't put me to the trouble of doing it for you.

Miran. My face is the same flesh and blood with my hand, Sir George, which if you'll be so rude to provoke——

Sir Geo. You'll apply it to my cheek—the ladies' favours are always welcome, but I must have that cloud withdrawn. [*Taking hold of her.*] Remember you are in the Park, child; and what a terrible thing would it be to lose this pretty white hand?

Miran. And how will it sound in a chocolate house, that Sir George Airy rudely pulled off a lady's mask, when he had given her his honour that he never would, directly or indirectly, endeavour to know her till she gave him leave?

Sir Geo. But if that lady thinks fit to pursue and meet me at every turn, like some troubled spirit, shall I be blamed if I inquire into the reality? I would have nothing dissatisfied in a female shape.

Miran. What shall I do—— [*Pauses.*

Sir Geo. Ay, pr'ythee, consider, for thou shalt find me very much at thy service.

Patch. Suppose, sir, the lady should be in love with you?

Sir Geo. Oh! I'll return the obligation in a moment.

Patch. And marry her?

Sir Geo. Ha, ha, ha! that's not the way to love her, child.

Miran. If he discovers me, I shall die——Which way shall I escape?——let me see— [*Pauses.*

Sir Geo. Well, madam——

Miran. I have it——Sir George, 'tis fit you should allow something; if you'll excuse my face, and turn your back, (if you look upon me, I shall sink, even masked as I am,) I will confess why I have engaged you so often, who I am, and where I live.

Sir Geo. Well, to show you I'm a man of honour, I accept the conditions: let me but once know those, and the face won't be long a secret to me.

Patch. What mean you, madam?

Miran. To get off.

Sir Geo. 'Tis something indecent to turn one's back upon a lady, but you command, and I obey. [*Turns his Back.*] Come, madam, begin—

Miran. First, then, it was my unhappy lot to see you at Paris, [*Draws back a little Way, and speaks.*] at a ball, upon a birthday; your shape and air charmed my eyes, your wit and complaisance my soul, and from that fatal night I loved you. [*Drawing back.*

And when you left the place, grief seiz'd me so,
Nor rest my heart, nor sleep my eyes could know,
Last I resolv'd, a hazardous point to try,
And quit the place, in search of liberty. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. Excellent—I hope she's handsome—Well, now, madam, to the two other things, your name, and where you live——I am a gentleman, and this confession will not be lost upon me—Nay, pr'ythee don't weep, but go on, for I find my heart melts in thy be-

half—Speak quickly, or I shall turn about——Not yet—Poor lady! she expects I should comfort her, and to do her justice, she has said enough to encourage me. [*Turns about.*] Ha! gone!—the devil!—jilted!—Why, what a tale she has invented—of Paris, balls, and birthdays!—Egad, I'd give ten guineas to know who the gipsy is—A curse of my folly—I deserve to lose her. What woman can forgive a man that turns his back!

The bold and resolute, in love and war,
To conquer, take the right and swiftest way;
The boldest lover soonest gains the fair,
As courage makes the rudest force obey:
Take no denial, and the dames adore ye;
Closely pursue them, and they fall before ye.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Room in SIR FRANCIS'S *House.*

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE *and* MIRANDA.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Miran. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Oh, I shall die with laughing—the most romantic adventure—Ha, ha, ha! What does the odious young fop mean? A hundred pieces to talk ten minutes with me! ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir Fran. And I am to be by, too, there's the jest:—adad, if it had been in private, I should not have cared to trust the young dog.

Miran. Indeed and indeed but you might, Gardy—Now methinks there's nobody handsomer than you: so neat, so clean, so good-humour'd, and so loving—

Sir Fran. Pretty rogue, pretty rogue! and so thou shalt find me, if thou dost prefer thy Gardy before these caperers of the age: thou shalt outshine the queen's box on an opera night; thou shalt be the envy of the ring, (for I will carry thee to Hyde-Park) and thy equipage shall surpass the——what d'ye call 'em ambassador's.

Miran. Nay, I am sure the discreet part of my sex will envy me more for the inside furniture, when you are in it, than my outside equipage.

Sir Fran. A cunning baggage i'faith thou art, and a wise one too! and to show thee, that thou hast not chose amiss, I'll this moment disinherit my son, and settle my whole estate upon thee.

Miran. There's an old rogue now. [*Aside.*] No, Gardy, I would not have your name be so black in the world—You know my father's will runs that I am not to possess my estate, without your consent, till I am five-and-twenty; you shall only abate the odd seven years, and make me mistress of my estate to-day, and I'll make you master of my person to-morrow.

Sir Fran. Humph! that may not be safe—No, Chargy, I'll settle it upon thee for pinmoney, and that will be every bit as well thou know'st.

Miran. Unconscionable old wretch! bribe me with my own money!—Which way shall I get out of his hands. [*Aside.*

Sir Fran. Well, what art thou thinking on, my girl, ha? how to banter Sir George!

Miran. I must not pretend to banter; he knows my tongue too well. [*Aside.*] No, Gardy, I have thought of a way will confound him more than all I could say, if I should talk to him seven years.

Sir Fran. How's that? oh! I'm transported, I'm ravish'd, I'm mad——

Miran. It would make you mad if you knew all. [*Aside.*] I'll not answer him a word, but be dumb to all he says.

Sir Fran. Dumb! good; ha, ha, ha! Excellent! ha, ha, ha, ha! I think I have you now, Sir George. Dumb! he'll go distracted—well, she's the wittiest rogue.—Ha, ha, dumb! I can't but laugh, ha, ha.! to think how damn'd mad he'll be when he finds he has given his money away for a dumb show; ha, ha, ha!

Miran. Nay, Gardy, if he did but know my thoughts of him, it would make him ten times madder; ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir Fran. Ay, so it would, Chargy, to hold him in such derision, to scorn to answer him, to be dumb! ha, ha, ha!

Enter CHARLES.

Sir Fran. How now, sirrah! who let you in?

Cha. My necessities, sir.

Sir Fran. Your necessities are very impertinent, and ought to have sent before they enter'd.

Cha. Sir, I knew 'twas a word would gain admittance no where.

Sir Fran. Then, sirrah, how durst you rudely thrust that upon your father, which nobody else would admit.

Cha. Sure the name of a son is a sufficient plea. I ask this lady's pardon if I have intruded.

Sir Fran. Ay, ay, ask her pardon and her blessing too, if you expect any thing from me.

Miran. I believe yours, Sir Francis, in a purse of guineas, would be more material. Your son may have business with you; I'll retire.

Sir Fran. I guess his business, but I'll despatch him;

I expect the knight every minute: you'll be in readiness?

Miran. Certainly; my expectation is more upon the wing than yours, old gentleman. [*Exit.*

Sir Fran. Well, sir.

Cha. Nay, it is very ill, sir; my circumstances are, I'm sure.

Sir Fran. And what's that to me, sir? your management should have made 'em better.

Cha. If you please to entrust me with the management of my estate, I shall endeavour it, sir.

Sir Fran. What, to set upon a card, and buy a lady's favour at the price of a thousand pieces, to rig out an equipage for a wench, or by your carelessness to enrich your steward, to fine for sheriff, or put up for a parliament-man?

Cha. I hope I should not spend it this way: however, I ask only for what my uncle left me; yours you may dispose of as you please, sir.

Sir Fran. That I shall, out of your reach, I assure you, sir. Adad, these young fellows think old men get estates for nothing but for them to squander away in dicing, wenching, drinking, dressing, and so forth.

Cha. I think I was born a gentleman, sir; I'm sure my uncle bred me like one.

Sir Fran. From which you would infer, sir, that gaming and drinking are requisites for a gentleman.

Cha. Monstrous! when I would ask him only for a support, he falls into these unmannerly reproaches. I must, though against my will, employ invention, and by stratagem relieve myself. [*Aside.*

Sir Fran. Sirrah, what is it you mutter, sirrah? ha! [*Holds up his Cane.*] I say you sha'n't have a groat out of my hands till I please——and may be I'll never please; and what's that to you?

Cha. Nay, to be robb'd or have one's throat cut is not much——

Sir Fran. What's that, sirrah? would you rob me or cut my throat, ye rogue?

Cha. Heaven forbid, sir!—I said no such thing.

Sir Fran. Mercy on me! what a plague it is to have a son of one-and-twenty, who wants to elbow one out of one's life to edge himself into the estate!

Enter MARPLOT.

Mar. Egad, he's here—I was afraid I had lost him: his secret could not be with his father; his wants are public there.—Guardian, your servant—O, Charles, are you there? I know by that sorrowful countenance of thine the old man's fist is as close as his strong box —But I'll help thee.

Sir Fran. So! here's another extravagant coxcomb that will spend his fortune before he comes to't, but he shall pay swinging interest, and so let the fool go on.—Well, what, does necessity bring you too, sir?

Mar. You have hit it, Guardian——I want a hundred pounds.

Sir Fran. For what?

Mar. Poh! for a hundred things; I can't for my life tell you for what.

Cha. Sir, I suppose I have received all the answer I am like to have.

Mar. Oh the devil! if he gets out before me I shall lose him again.

Sir Fran. Ay, sir, and you may be marching as soon as you please—I must see a change in your temper, ere you find one in mine.

Mar. Pray, sir, despatch me; the money, sir; I'm in mighty haste.

Sir Fran. Fool, take this and go to the cashier. I sha'n't be long plagu'd with thee. [*Gives him a Note.*

Mar. Devil take the cashier! I shall certainly have Charles gone before I come back. [*Runs out.*

Cha. Well, sir, I take my leave—but remember you expose an only son to all the miseries of wretched

poverty, which too often lays the plan for scenes of mischief.

Sir Fran. Stay, Charles! I have a sudden thought come into my head may prove to thy advantage.

Cha. Ha! does he relent?

Sir Fran. My Lady Wrinkle, worth forty thousand pounds, sets up for a handsome young husband; she prais'd thee t'other day; though the matchmakers can get twenty guineas for a sight of her, I can introduce thee for nothing.

Cha. My Lady Wrinkle, sir! why, she has but one eye.

Sir Fran. Then she'll see but half your extravagance, sir.

Cha. Condemn me to such a piece of deformity! a toothless, dirty, wry-neck'd, hunch-back'd, hag!

Sir Fran. Hunch-back'd! so much the better? then she has a rest for her misfortunes, for thou wilt load her swingingly. Now, I warrant, you think this is no offer of a father; forty thousand pounds is nothing with you.

Cha. Yes, sir, I think it is too much; a young beautiful woman, with half the money, would be more agreeable.—I thank you, sir; but you choose better for yourself I find.

Sir Fran. Out of my doors, you dog! you pretend to meddle with my marriage, sirrah!

Cha. Sir, I obey; but—

Sir Fran. But me no buts—begone, sir! dare to ask me for money again——refuse forty thousand pounds! Out of my doors, I say, without reply. [*Exit* CHA.

Enter MARPLOT, *running*.

Mar. Ha? gone! is Charles gone, Gardy?

Sir Fran. Yes, and I desire your wise worship to walk after him.

Mar. Nay, egad I shall run, I tell you that. A pox of the cashier for detaining me so long! Where the

devil shall I find him now? I shall certainly lose this secret, and I had rather by half lose my money—— Where shall I find him now——D'ye know where Charles is gone, Gardy?

Sir Fran. Gone to the devil, and you may go after him.

Mar. Ay, that I will, as fast as I can. [*Going, returns.*] Have you any commands there, Gardy? [*Exit.*

Sir Fran. What, is the fellow distracted?

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir George Airy inquires for you, sir.

Sir Fran. Desire Sir George to walk up.——Now for a trial of skill, that will make me happy and him a fool. Ha, ha, ha! In my mind, he looks like an ass already.

Enter SIR GEORGE.

Well, Sir George, do you hold in the same mind, or would you capitulate? ha, ha, ha! Look, here are the guineas; [*Chinks them.*] ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. Not if they were twice the sum, Sir Francis; therefore be brief, call in the lady, and take your post.

Sir Fran. Agreed. Miranda! [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. If she's a woman, and not seduced by witchcraft to this old rogue, I'll make his heart ache; for if she has but one grain of inclination about her, I'll vary a thousand shapes but find it.

Enter MIRANDA *and* SIR FRANCIS.

Sir Fran. There, Sir George, try your fortune. [*Takes out his Watch.*

Sir Geo. So from the eastern chambers breaks the sun, dispels the clouds, and gilds the vales below. [*Salutes her.*

Sir Fran. Hold, sir; kissing was not in our agreement.

Sir Geo. Oh! that's by way of prologue. Pr'ythee, old mammon, to thy post.

Sir Fra. Well, young Timon, 'tis now four exactly; ten minutes, remember, is your utmost limit; not a minute more. [*Retires to the Bottom of the Stage.*

Sir Geo. Madam, whether you'll excuse or blame my love, the author of this rash proceeding, depends upon your pleasure, as also the life of your admirer; your sparkling eyes speak a heart susceptible of love, your vivacity a soul too delicate to admit the embraces of decayed mortality.

Miran. [*Aside.*] Oh! that I durst speak——

Sir Geo. Shake off this tyrant guardian's yoke; assume yourself, and dash his bold aspiring hopes. The deity of his desires is avarice, a heretic in love, and ought to be banished by the queen of beauty. See, madam, a faithful servant kneels, and begs to be admitted in the number of your slaves.

[MIRANDA *gives him her Hand to raise him.*

Sir Fran. I wish I could hear what he says now. [*Running up.*] Hold, hold, hold! no palming; that's contrary to articles——

Sir Geo. 'Sdeath, sir, keep your distance, or I'll write another article in your guts.

[*Lays his Hand to his Sword.*

Sir Fran. [*Going back.*] A bloody-minded fellow.

Sir Geo. Not answer me! perhaps she thinks my address too grave: I'll be more free—Can you be so unconscionable, madam, to let me say all these fine things to you without one single compliment in return? View me well; am I not a proper handsome fellow, ha? can you prefer that old, dry, wither'd, sapless log of sixty-five, to the vigorous, gay, sprightly love of twenty-four? With snoring only he'll awake thee, but I with ravishing delight would make thy senses dance in concert with the joyful minutes—Thus

would I steal and touch thy beauteous hand, [*Takes hold of her Hand.*] then ravish kisses thus.

[*Embraces her with Ecstacy.*

Sir Fran. [*Running up with his Watch in his Hand.*] There's five of the ten minutes gone, Sir George.

Sir Geo. More interruptions—you will have it, sir!

[*Lays his Hand to his Sword.*

Sir Fran. [*Going back.*] No, no; you sha'n't have her neither. [*Aside.*

Sir Geo. Dumb still—sure this old dog has enjoin'd her silence. I'll try another way—Madam, these few minutes cost me a hundred pounds—and would you answer me, I could purchase the whole day so. However, madam, you must give me leave to make the best interpretation I can for my money, and take the indication of your silence for the secret liking of my person; therefore, madam, I will instruct you how to keep your word inviolate to Sir Francis, and yet answer me to every question: as, for example, when I ask any thing to which you would reply in the affirmative, gently nod your head—thus, [*Nods.*] and when in the negative, thus, [*Shakes his Head.*] and in the doubtful, a tender sigh, thus, [*Sighs.*]

Miran. How every action charms me!—but I'll fit him for signs, I warrant him. [*Aside.*

Sir Geo. Was it by his desire that you are dumb, madam, to all I can say? [MIRANDA *nods.*] Very well! she's tractable I find—And is it possible that you can love him? [MIRANDA *nods.*] Miraculous! Pardon the bluntness of my questions, for my time is short. May I not hope to supplant him in your esteem? [MIRANDA *sighs.*] Good! she answers me as I could wish.—You'll not consent to marry him then? [MIRANDA *sighs.*] How! doubtful in that?—Undone again—Humph! but that may proceed from his power to keep her out of her estate 'till twenty-five: I'll try that—Come, madam, I cannot think you hesitate in this affair out of any motive but your fortune—

let him keep it 'till those few years are expired; make me happy with your person, let him enjoy your wealth. [MIRANDA *holds up her Hands.*] Why, what sign is that now? Nay, nay, madam, except you observe my lesson, I can't understand your meaning.

Sir Fran. What a vengeance! are they talking by signs? 'ad I may be fool'd here. What do you mean, Sir George?

Sir Geo. To cut your throat, if you dare mutter another syllable.

Sir Fran. 'Od I wish he were fairly out of my house!

Sir Geo. Pray, madam, will you answer me to the purpose? [MIRANDA *shakes her Head, and points to* SIR FRANCIS.] What does she mean! she won't answer me to the purpose, or is she afraid yon' old cuff should understand her signs?——ay, it must be that. I perceive, madam, you are too apprehensive of the promise you have made, to follow my rules, therefore I'll suppose your mind, and answer for you. ——"First for myself, madam; that I am in love with you is an infallible truth." Now for you. [*Turns on her Side.*] "Indeed, sir! and may I believe it?"—— "As certainly, madam, as that 'tis daylight, or that I die if you persist in silence.—Bless me with the music of your voice, and raise my spirits to their proper Heaven. Thus low let me entreat, ere I'm obliged to quit this place; grant me some token of a favourable reception to keep my hopes alive." [*Arises hastily, turns on her Side.*] "Rise, sir, and since my guardian's presence will not allow me privilege of tongue, read that, and rest assured you are not indifferent to me." [*Offers her a Letter, she strikes it down.*] "Ha, right woman! but no matter; I'll go on."

Sir Fran. Ha! what's that! a letter!——Ha, ha, ha! thou art baulk'd.

Sir Geo. Ha! a letter! oh! let me kiss it with the same raptures that I would do the dear hand that

touched it. [*Opens it.*] Now for a quick fancy, and a long extempore——

Sir Fran. The time is expired, sir, and you must take your leave. There, my girl, there's the hundred pounds which thou hast won. Go, I'll be with you presently; ha, ha, ha, ha! [*Exit* MIRANDA.

Sir Geo. 'Adsheart, madam, you won't leave me just in the nick, will you?

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! she has nick'd you, Sir George, I think; ha, ha, ha! Have you any more hundred pounds to throw away upon courtship? ha, ha, ha!—Did I not tell thee thou wouldst repent thy money?. Did I not say she hated young fellows? ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. And I'm positive she's not in love with age.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! no matter for that, ha, ha! She's not taken with your youth, nor your rhetoric to boot; ha, ha!

Sir Geo. Whate'er her reasons are for disliking of me, I am certain she can be taken with nothing about thee.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! how he swells with envy—Poor man! poor man!—ha, ha, ha! I must beg your pardon, Sir George; Miranda will be impatient to have her share of mirth. Verily, we shall laugh at thee most egregiously; ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. With all my heart, faith——I shall laugh in my turn too—for if you dare marry her, old Belzebub, you will be cuckolded most egregiously; remember that, and tremble—— [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

SIR JEALOUS TRAFFIC'S *House.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS; ISABINDA *and* PATCH *following.*

Sir Jeal. What, in the balcony again, notwithstanding my positive commands to the contrary?—Why don't you write a bill on your forehead, to show passengers there's something to be let?——

Isab. What harm can there be in a little fresh air, sir?

Sir Jeal. Is your constitution so hot, mistress, that it wants cooling, ha? Apply the virtuous Spanish rules; banish your taste and thoughts of flesh, feed upon roots, and quench your thirst with water.

Isab. That and a close room would certainly make me die of the vapours.

Sir Jeal. No, mistress, 'tis your high-fed, lusty, rambling, rampant ladies—that are troubled with the vapours: 'tis your ratafia, persico, cinnamon, citron, and spirit of clara, cause such swimming in the brain, that carries many a guinea full tide to the doctor: but you are not to be bred this way: no galloping abroad, no receiving visits at home, for in our loose country the women are as dangerous as the men.

Patch. So I told her, sir, and that it was not decent to be seen in a balcony—but she threatened to slap my chops, and told me I was her servant, not her governess.

Sir Jeal. Did she so? but I'll make her to know that you are her duenna. Oh, that incomparable cus-

tom of Spain! Why, here's no depending upon old women in my country—for they are as wanton at eighty as a girl of eighteen, and a man may as safely trust to Asgil's translation, as to his great grandmother's not marrying again.

Isab. Or to the Spanish ladies' veils and duennas for the safeguard of their honour.

Sir Jeal. Dare to ridicule the cautious conduct of that wise nation, and I'll have you lock'd up this fortnight without a peep-hole.

Isab. If we had but the ghostly helps in England which they have in Spain, I might deceive you if you did——Let me tell you, sir, confinement sharpens the invention, as want of sight strengthens the other senses, and is often more pernicious than the recreation that innocent liberty allows.

Sir Jeal. Say you so, mistress! who the devil taught you the art of reasoning? I assure you, they must have a greater faith than I pretend to, that can think any woman innocent who requires liberty; therefore, Patch, to your charge I give her; lock her up till I come back from 'Change. I shall have some sauntering coxcomb, with nothing but a red coat and a feather, think, by leaping into her arms, to leap into my estate—but I'll prevent them; she shall be only Signior Babinetto's.

Patch. Really, sir, I wish you would employ any body else in this affair; I lead a life like a dog with obeying your commands. Come, madam, will you please to be locked up?

Isab. Ay, to enjoy more freedom than he is aware of. [*Aside.*] [*Exit with* PATCH.

Sir Jeal. I believe this wench is very true to my interest: I am happy I met with her, if I can but keep my daughter from being blown upon till Signior Babinetto arrives, who shall marry her as soon as he comes, and carry her to Spain as soon as he has married her. She has a pregnant wit, and I'd no more have

her an English wife than the Grand Signior's mistress. [*Exit.*

Enter WHISPER.

Whisp. So, I saw Sir Jealous go out; where shall I find Mrs. Patch now?

Enter PATCH.

Patch. Oh, Mr. Whisper! my lady saw you out of the window, and order'd me to bid you fly and let your master know she's now alone.

Whisp. Hush! speak softly! I go, I go! But hark ye, Mrs. Patch, shall not you and I have a little confabulation, when my master and your lady are engag'd?

Patch. Ay, ay; farewell.

[*Goes in and shuts the Door.*

Re-enter Sir JEALOUS TRAFFIC, *meeting* WHISPER.

Sir Jeal. Sure, whilst I was talking with Mr. Tradewell, I heard my door clap. [*Seeing* WHISPER. Ha! a man lurking about my house! Who do you want there, sir?

Whisp. Want—want; a pox! Sir Jealous! What must I say now?

Sir Jeal. Ay, want! Have you a letter or message for any body there?—O' my conscience this is some he-baw'd——

Whisp. Letter or message, sir?

Sir Jeal. Ay, letter or message, sir?

Whisp. No, not I, sir.

Sir Jeal. Sirrah, sirrah! I'll have you set in the stocks if you don't tell your business immediately.

Whisp. Nay, sir, my business—is no great matter of business neither, and yet 'tis business of consequence too.

Sir Jeal. Sirrah, don't trifle with me.

Whisp. Trifle, sir! have you found him, sir?

Sir Jeal. Found what, you rascal?

Whisp. Why, Trifle is the very lapdog my lady lost, sir; I fancy'd I saw him run into this house. I'm glad you have him, sir;—my lady will be overjoy'd that I have found him.

Sir Jeal. Who is your lady, friend?

Whisp. My lady Lovepuppy, sir.

Sir Jeal. My lady Lovepuppy, sir! then pr'ythee carry thyself to her, for I know of no other whelp that belongs to her; and let me catch you no more puppy-hunting about my doors, lest I have you pressed into the service, sirrah.

Whisp. By no means, sir,—Your humble servant: I must watch whether he goes or no before I can tell my master. [*Exit.*

Sir Jeal. This fellow has the officious leer of a pimp, and I half suspect a design; but I'll be upon them before they think on me, I warrant 'em. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

CHARLES's *Lodgings.*

Enter CHARLES *and* MARPLOT.

Cha. Honest Marplot! I thank thee for this supply. I expect my lawyer with a thousand pounds I have ordered him to take up, and then you shall be repaid.

Mar. Pho, pho! no more of that. Here comes Sir George Airy,

Enter SIR GEORGE,

cursedly out of humour at his disappointment. See how he looks! ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. Ah, Charles! I am so humbled in my pretensions to plot upon women, that I believe I shall never have courage enough to attempt a chamber-maid again——I'll tell thee——

Cha. Ha, ha! I'll spare you the relation by telling you—Impatient to know your business with my father, when I saw you enter I slipt back into the next room, where I overheard every syllable.

Mar. Did you, Charles? I wish I had been with you.

Sir George. That I said—but I'll be hang'd if you heard her answer——But pry'thee tell me, Charles, is she a fool?

Cha. I never suspected her for one; but Marplot can inform you better if you'll allow him a judge.

Mar. A fool! I'll justify she has more wit than all the rest of her sex put together. Why, she'll rally me till I ha'n't a word to say for myself.

Cha. A mighty proof of her wit, truly—

Mar. There must be some trick in't, Sir George: egad I'll find it out if it cost me the sum you paid for't.

Sir Geo. Do, and command me——

Mar. Enough, let me alone to trace a secret—

Enter WHISPER, *and speaks aside to his Master.*

The devil! he here again? damn that fellow, he never speaks out. Is this the same or a new secret? Sir George, won't you ask Charles what news Whisper brings?

Sir Geo. Not I, sir; I suppose it does not relate to me.

Mar. Lord, Lord; how little curiosity some people have! Now my chief pleasure is in knowing every body's business.

Sir Geo. I fancy, Charles, thou hast some engagement upon thy hands?

Cha. You guess right, Sir George—wish me success.

Sir Geo. Better than attended me. Adieu, Marplot, if it falls in your way to bring me an intelligence from Miranda, you'll find me at the T[illegible] house at six—

Mar. You do me much honour.

Cha. Marplot, you must excuse me——

Mar. Nay, nay; what need of any excuse amongst friends? I'll go with you.

Cha. Indeed you must not.

Mar. No; why you won't fight; then I [illegible] 'tis a duel, and I will go to secure you.

Cha. Well, but 'tis no duel, consequently no danger; therefore, pry'thee be answer'd.

Mar. What, is't a mistress then?—Mum—you know I can be silent upon occasion.

Cha. I wish you could be civil too: I tell you, you neither must nor shall go with me. Farewell. [*Exit.*

Mar. Why then—I must and will follow you. [*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

The Street.

Enter CHARLES.

Cha. Well, here's the house which holds the lovely prize, quiet and serene: here no noisy footmen throng to tell the world that beauty dwells within; no ceremonious visit makes the lover wait, no rival to give my heart a pang. Who would not scale the window at midnight, without fear of the jealous father's pistol, rather than fill up the train of a coquette, where every minute he is jostled out of place! [*Knocks softly.*] Mrs. Patch, Mrs. Patch!

Enter PATCH.

Patch. Oh, are you come, sir? All's safe.
Cha. So, in, in then.

Enter MARPLOT.

Mar. There he goes! Who the devil lives here? except I can find out that, I am as far from knowing his business as ever. Gad I'll watch; it may be a bawdy-house, and he may have his throat cut. If there should be any mischief, I can make oath he went in. Well, Charles, in spite of your endeavours to keep me out of the secret, I may save your life, for aught I know. At that corner I'll plant myself; there I shall see whoever goes in or comes out. Gad I love discoveries. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Chamber.

CHARLES, ISABINDA, *and* PATCH, *discovered.*

Isab. Patch, look out sharp; have a care of dad.
Patch. I warrant you.
Isab. Well, sir, if I may judge of your love by your courage, I ought to believe you sincere, for you venture into the lion's den when you come to see me.
Cha. If you'd consent whilst the furious beast is abroad, I'd free you from the reach of his paws.
Isab. That would be but to avoid one danger by running into another. Come, come, Charles, I fear if I consult my reason, confinement and plenty is better than liberty and starving. I know you would make the frolic pleasing for a little time, by saying and doing a world of tender things; but when our small substance is exhausted, and a thousand requisites for life are wanting, Love, who rarely dwells with Poverty, would also fail us.

Cha. Faith I fancy not; methinks my [illegible] laid up a stock will last for life; to back wh[illegible] taken a thousand pounds upon my uncl[illegible] that surely will support us till one of our [illegible] lent.

Isab. There's no trusting to that, my [illegible] doubt your father will carry his humour to [illegible] and mine till he sees me settled in Spain.

Cha. And can you then cruelly resolve t[illegible] that cursed Don arrives, and suffer th[illegible] beauty, fire, and wit, to be sacrific'd to the [illegible] dull Spaniard, to be immured, and forbid the sight of of any thing that's human?

Isab. No, when it comes to that extremity, and no stratagem can relieve us, thou shalt list for a soldier, and I'll carry thy knapsack after thee.

Cha. Bravely resolv'd! the world cannot be more savage than our parents, and fortune generally assists the bold, therefore, consent now: why should she put it to a future hazard? who knows when we shall have another opportunity?

Isab. Oh, you have your ladder of ropes, I suppose, and the closet window stands just where it did; and if you ha'n't forgot to write in characters, Patch will find a way for our assignations. Thus much of the Spanish contrivance my father's severity has taught me, I thank him; though I hate the nation, I admire their management in these affairs.

Enter PATCH.

Patch. O, madam! I see my master coming up the street.

Cha. O the devil! 'would I had my ladder now! I thought you had not expected him till night. Why, why, why, why, what shall I do, madam:

Isab. Oh! for Heaven's sake, don't go that way; you'll meet him full in the teeth.

Cha. 'Adsheart! can you shut me into no cupboard, nor ram me into a chest, ha?

Patch. Impossible, sir, he searches every hole in the house.

Isab. Undone for ever! if he sees you, I shall never see you more.

Patch. I have thought on it: run you to your chamber, madam; and, sir, come you along with me; I'm certain you may easily get down from the balcony.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The Street.

Enter SIR JEALOUS, *with* MARPLOT *behind him.*

Sir Jeal. I don't know what's the matter, but I have a strong suspicion all is not right within; that fellow's sauntering about my door, and his tale of a puppy, had the face of a lie, methought. By St. Iago, if I should find a man in the house I'd make mince meat of him—

Mar. Mince meat; Ah, poor Charles! how I sweat for thee! Egad he's old—I fancy I might bully him, and make Charles have an opinion of my courage.

Sir Jeal. My own key shall let me in; I'll give them no warning. [*Feeling for his key.*

Mar. What's that you say, sir?

[*Going up to Sir* JEAL.

Sir Jeal. What's that to you, sir?

[*Turns quick upon him.*

Mar. Yes, 'tis to me, sir, for the gentleman you threaten is a very honest gentleman. Look to't, for if he comes not as safe out of your house as he went in—

Sir Jeal. What, is he in, then?

Mar. Yes, sir, he is, then; and I say if h
come out, I have half a dozen myrmidons
shall beat your house about your ears.

Sir Jeal. Ah! a combination to undo
myrmidon you, ye dog you—Thieves! thi

[*Beats* MARPLOT *all the while he cri*

Mar. Murder, Murder! I was not in y
sir.

Enter THOMAS.

Tho. What's the matter, sir?

Sir Jeal. The matter, rascal! you have let a man into my house, but I'll flea him alive. Follow me; I'll not leave a mousehole unsearch'd. If I find him—

[*Exit.*

Mar. A deuce of his cane! there's no trusting to age—What shall I do to relieve Charles? egad I'll raise the neighbourhood.—Murder! Murder!——

[*Charles drops down upon him from the Balcony.*] Charles! faith I'm glad to see thee safe out with all my heart!

Cha. A pox of your bawling! how the devil came you here?

Mar. Egad it's very well for you that I was here; I have done you a piece of service: I told the old thunderbolt that the gentleman that was gone in was—

Cha. Was it you that told him, sir?

Mar. Yes, I told him.—

Cha. [*Laying hold of him.*] 'Sdeath! I could crush thee into atoms.

[*Exit* CHARLES.

Mar. What! will you choke me for my kindness? —Will my inquiring soul never leave searching into other people's affairs till it gets squeez'd out of my body? I dare not follow him now for my blood, he's in such a passion.——I'll to Miranda; if I can dis-

cover aught that may oblige Sir George, it may be a means to reconcile me again to Charles.

Sir Jeal. [*Within.*] Look about! search! find him out!

Mar. Oh, the devil! there's old Crabstick again.

[*Exit.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS *and his Servants.*

Sir Jeal. Are you sure you have search'd every where?

Serv. Yes, from the top of the house to the bottom.

Sir Jeal. Under the beds and over the beds?

Serv. Yes, and in them too, but found nobody, sir.

Sir Jeal. Why, what could this rogue mean?

Enter ISABINDA *and* PATCH.

Patch. Take courage, madam, I saw him safe out.

[*Aside to* ISAB.

Isab. Bless me! what's the matter, sir?

Sir Jeal. You know best—Pray where's the man that was here just now?

Isab. What man, sir? I saw none.

Patch. Nor I, by the trust you repose in me. Do you think I would let a man come within these doors when you are absent?

Sir Jeal. Ah, Patch! she may be too cunning for thy honesty: the very scout that he had set to give warning, discovered it to me—and threatened me with half a dozen myrmidons—but I think I maul'd the villain. These afflictions you draw upon me, mistress!

Isab. Pardon me, sir, 'tis your own ridiculous humour draws you into these vexations, and gives every fool pretence to banter you.

Sir Jeal. No, 'tis your idle conduct, your coquettish flirting into the balcony—Oh! with what joy shall I resign thee into the arms of Don Diego Babinetto!

Isab. And with what industry shall I avoid him. [*Aside.*

Sir Jeal. Certainly that rogue had a message from somebody or other, but being baulk'd by my coming, popp'd that sham upon me. Come along, ye sots, let's see if we can find the dog again. Patch, lock her up, d'ye hear? [*Exit with* SERVANTS.

Patch. Yes, sir—Ay, walk till your heels ache, you'll find nobody, I promise you.

Isab. Who could that scout be which he talks of?

Patch. Nay, I can't imagine without it was Whisper.

Isab. Well, dear Patch! let's employ all our thoughts how to escape this horrid Don Diego; my very heart sinks at his terrible name.

Patch. Fear not, madam; Don Carlo shall be the man, or I'll lose the reputation of contriving, and then what's a chambermaid good for?

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

SIR FRANCIS GRIPE'S *House.*

Enter SIR FRANCIS *and* MIRANDA meeting.

Miran. Well, Gardy, how did I perform the dumb scene?

Sir Fran. To admiration—Thou dear little rogue! let me buss thee for it: nay, adad I will, Chargy, so muzzle, and tuzzle, and hug thee; I will, *i'faith* I will. [*Hugging and kissing her.*

Miran. Nay, Gardy, don't be so lavish. Who would ride post when the journey lasts for life?

Sir Fran. Ah wag, ah wag! I'll buss thee again for that. Oh, I'm transported! When, when, my dear! wilt thou convince the world of the happy day? when shall we marry, ha?

Miran. There's nothing wanting but your consent, Sir Francis.

Sir Fran. My consent! what does my charmer mean?

Miran. Nay, 'tis only a whim; but I'll have every thing according to form—therefore when you sign an authentic paper drawn up by an able lawyer, that I have your leave to marry, the next day makes me yours, Gardy.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! a whim indeed! why, is it not demonstration I give my leave when I marry thee?

Miran. Not for your reputation, Gardy; the malicious world will be apt to say you trick me into marriage, and so take the merit from my choice: now I will have the act my own, to let the idle fops see how much I prefer a man loaded with years and wisdom.

Sir Fran. Humph! Pr'ythee leave out years, Chargy; I'm not so old, as thou shalt find. Adad I'm young: there's a caper for ye! [*Jumps.*

Miran. Oh, never excuse it; Why, I like you the better for being old—but I shall suspect you don't love me if you refuse me this formality.

Sir Fran. Not love thee, Chargy! Adad I do love thee better than, than, than, better than——what shall I say? egad better than money? i'faith I do—

Miran. That's false, I'm sure. [*Aside.*] To prove it, do this then.

Sir Fran. Well, I will do it, Chargy, provided I bring a license at the same time.

Miran. Ay, and a parson too if you please. Ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing to think how all the young coxcombs about town will be mortified when they hear of our marriage.

Sir Fran. So they will, so they will; ha, ha, ha!

Miran. Well, I fancy I shall be so happy with my Gardy—

Sir Fran. If wearing pearls and jewels, or eating gold, as the old saying is, can make thee happy, thou shalt be so, my sweetest, my lovely, my charming, my—verily I know not what to call thee.

Miran. You must know, Gardy, that I am so eager to have this business concluded, that I have employed my woman's brother, who is a lawyer in the Temple, to settle matters just to your liking; you are to give your consent to my marriage, which is to yourself, you know: but, mum, you must take no notice of that. So then I will, that is, with your leave, put my writings into his hands; then to-morrow we come slap upon them with a wedding that nobody thought on, by which you seize me and my estate, and I suppose make a bonfire of your own act and deed.

Sir Fran. Nay, but Chargy, if——

Miran. Nay, Gardy, no Ifs.——Have I refus'd three northern lords, two British peers, and half a score knights, to have you put in your Ifs?

Sir Fran. So thou hast indeed, and I will trust to thy management. 'Od I'm all of a fire.

Enter MARPLOT.

Sir Fran. How now, who sent for you, sir? What, is the hundred pound gone already?

Mar. No, sir; I don't want money now, Gardy.

Sir Fran. No, that's a miracle! but there's one thing you want I'm sure.

Mar. Aye, what's that?

Sir Fran. Manners! What, had I no servants without?

Mar. None that could do my business, Guardian, which is at present with this lady.

Miran. With me, Mr. Marplot? what is it, I beseech you?

Sir Fran. Ay, sir, what is it? any thing that relates to her may be delivered to me.

Mar. I deny that.

Miran. That's more than I do, sir.

Mar. Indeed, madam! Why, then to proceed:—Fame says, that you and my most conscionable guardian here, designed, contrived, plotted, and agreed, to chouse a very civil, honest, honourable gentleman, out of a hundred pounds.

Miran. That I contrived it?

Mar. Ay, you—you said never a word against it—so far you are guilty.

Sir Fran. Pray tell that civil, honest, honourable gentleman, that if he has any more such sums to fool away, they shall be received like the last; ha, ha, ha! Choused, quotha! But, harkye, let him know at the same time, that if he dare to report I tricked him of it, I shall recommend a lawyer to him, shall show him a trick for twice as much. D'ye hear? tell him that.

Mar. So, and this is the way you use a gentleman, and my friend!

Miran. Is the wretch thy friend?

Mar. The wretch!—look ye, madam, don't call names, egad, I won't take it.

Miran. Why, you won't beat me, will you?—Ha, ha!

Mar. I don't know whether I will or no.

Sir Fran. Sir, I shall make a servant show you out at the window, if you are saucy.

Mar. I am your most humble servant, Guardian; I design to go out the same way I came in. I would only ask this lady one question.—Don't you think, in your soul, that Sir George Airy is a very fine gentleman?

Miran. He dresses well.

Sir Fran. Which is chiefly owing to his tailor and valet de chambre.

Miran. And if being a beau be a proof of his being a fine gentleman, he may be so.

Mar. He may be so! Why, ma'am, the judicious

part of the world allow him wit, courage, gallantry, ay, and economy too, tho' I think he forfeited that character when he flung away a hundred pounds upon your dumb ladyship.

Sir Fran. Does that gall him? Ha, ha, ha!

Miran. So Sir George, remaining in deep discontent, has sent you, his trusty squire, to utter his complaint. Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Yes, madam; and you, like a cruel hard-hearted Jew, value it no more—than I wou'd your ladyship, were I Sir George; you, you, you——

Miran. Oh, don't call names: I know you love to be employed, and I'll oblige you, and you shall carry him a message from me.

Mar. According as I like it. What is it?

Miran. Nay, a kind one you may be sure——First tell him I have chose this 'gentleman' to have and to hold, and so forth.

[*Clapping her Hand into* SIR FRANCIS's.

Mar. Much good may do you!

Sir Fran. Oh, the dear rogue! how I dote on her! [*Aside.*

Miran. And advise his Impertinence to trouble me no more, for I prefer Sir Francis for a husband before all the fops in the universe.

Mar. Oh Lord, oh Lord! she's bewitched, that's certain. Here's a husband for eighteen—here's a tit-bit for a young lady—here's a shape, an air, and a grace—here's bones rattling in a leathern bag—[*Turning* SIR FRANCIS *about.*] here's buckram and canvas to scrub you to repentance.

Sir Fran. Sirrah, my cane shall teach you repentance presently.

Mar. No, faith, I have felt its twin brother from just such a wither'd hand too lately.

Miran. One thing more; advise him to keep from the garden-gate on the left hand, for if he dare to

saunter there, about the hour of eight, as he us'd to do, he shall be salutēd with a pistol or a blunderbuss.

Sir Fran. Oh, monstrous! Why, Chargy, did he use to come to the garden-gate?

Miran. The gardener described just such another man, that always watch'd his coming out, and fain wou'd have brib'd him for his entrance—Tell him he shall find a warm reception if he comes this night.

Mar. Pistols and blunderbusses! Egad a warm reception indeed! I shall take care to inform him of your kindness, and advise him to keep farther off.

Miran. I hope he will understand my meaning better than to follow your advice. [*Aside.*

Sir Fran. Thou hast sign'd, seal'd, and ta'en possession of my heart for ever, Chargy, ha ha, ha! and for you, Mr. Saucebox, let me have no more of your messages, if ever you design to inherit your estate, gentleman.

Mar. Why, there 'tis now. Sure I shall be out of your clutches one day—Well, Guardian, I say no more: but if you be not as arrant a cuckold as e'er drove bargain upon the Exchange, or paid attendance to a court, I am the son of a whetstone; and so your humble servant.

Miran. Mr. Marplot, don't forget the message: ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Nang, nang, nang! [*Exit.*

Sir Fran. I am so provok'd—'tis well he's gone.

Miran. Oh, mind him not, Gardy, but let's sign articles, and then——

Sir Fran. And then—Adad I believe I am metamorphos'd, my pulse beats high, and my blood boils, methinks—— [*Kissing and hugging her.*

Miran. Oh, fie, Gardy! be not so violent: consider the market lasts all the year.—Well; I'll in, and see if the lawyer be come: you'll follow? [*Exit.*

Sir Fran. Ay, to the world's end, my dear! Well, Frank, thou art a lucky fellow in thy old age, to have

such a delicate morsel, and thirty thousand pounds, in love with thee. I shall be the envy of bachelors, the glory of married men, and the wonder of the town. Some guardians would be glad to compound for part of the estate at despatching an heiress, but I engross the whole. *O! mihi præteritos referet si Jupiter annos.*

[Exit.

SCENE V.

A Tavern.

SIR GEORGE *and* CHARLES *discovered with Wine before them.* WHISPER *waiting.*

Sir Geo. Nay, pr'ythee, don't be grave, Charles: misfortunes will happen. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis some comfort to have a companion in our sufferings.

Cha. I am only apprehensive for Isabinda; her father's humour is implacable; and how far his jealousy may transport him to her undoing, shocks my soul to think.

Sir Geo. But since you escaped undiscovered by him, his rage will quickly lash into a calm, never fear it.

Cha. But who knows what that unlucky dog, Marplot, told him; nor can I imagine what brought him hither: that fellow is ever doing mischief; and yet, to give him his due, he never designs it. This is some blundering adventure, wherein he thought to show his friendship, as he calls it!—a curse on him!

Sir Geo. Then you must forgive him. What said he?

Cha. Said!—nay, I had more mind to cut his throat, than to hear his excuses.

Sir Geo. Where is he?

Whisp. Sir, I saw him go into Sir Francis Gripe's, just now.

Cha. Oh! then he's upon your business, Sir George: a thousand to one, but he makes some mistake there, too.

Sir Geo. Impossible, without he huffs the lady, and makes love to Sir Francis.

Enter DRAWER.

Draw. Mr. Marplot is below, gentlemen, and desires to know if he may have leave to wait upon ye.

Cha. How civil the rogue is, when he has done a fault!

Sir Geo. Ho! desire him to walk up. Pr'ythee, Charles, throw off this chagrin, and be good company.

Cha. Nay, hang him, I'm not angry with him.

Enter MARPLOT.

Cha. Do but mark his sheepish look, Sir George.

Mar. Dear Charles! don't overwhelm a man already under insupportable affliction. I'm sure, I always intend to serve my friends, but if my malicious stars deny the happiness, is the fault mine?

Sir Geo. Never mind him, Mr. Marplot; he's eat up with spleen. But, tell me, what says Miranda?

Mar. Says!—nay, we are all undone there, too.

Cha. I told you so; nothing prospers that he undertakes.

Mar. Why, can I help her having chose your father for better for worse?

Cha. So; there's another of fortune's strokes. I suppose I shall be edged out of my estate, with twins every year, let who will get them.

Sir Geo. What! is the woman really possessed?

Mar. Yes, with the spirit of contradiction: she railed at you most prodigiously.

Sir Geo. That's no ill sign.

Mar. You'd say it was no good sign, if you knew all.

Sir Geo. Why, pr'ythee?

Mar. Harkye, Sir George, let me warn you; pursue your old haunt no more; it may be dangerous.

Sir Geo. My old haunt!—What do you mean?

Mar. Why, in short then, since you will have it,—Miranda vows, if you dare approach the garden gate, at eight o'clock, as you used, you shall be saluted with a blunderbuss, sir. These were her very words: nay, she bid me tell you so, too.

Sir Geo. Ha! the garden gate, at eight, as I used to do! There must be meaning in this.—Is there such a gate, Charles?

Cha. Yes, yes, it opens into the park:—I suppose her ladyship has made many a scamper through it.

Sir Geo. It must be an assignation then. Ha! my heart springs for joy! 'tis a propitious omen.—My dear Marplot, let me embrace thee!—thou art my friend, my better angel.

Mar. What do you mean, Sir George?

Sir Geo. No matter what I mean. Here, take a bumper to the garden gate, you dear rogue, you!

Mar. You have reason to be transported, Sir George; I have saved your life.

Sir Geo. My life! thou hast saved my soul, man. Charles, if thou dost not pledge this health, may'st thou never taste the joys of love.

Cha. Whisper, be sure you take care how you deliver this. [*Gives him the Letter.*] Bring me the answer to my lodgings.

Whisp. I warrant you, sir.

Mar. Whither does that letter go? Now, dare I not ask for my blood—That fellow knows more secrets than I do. [*Exit* WHISPER.

Cha. Now, I'm for you.

Sir Geo. To the garden gate, at the hour of eight, Charles:—along; huzza!

Cha. I begin to conceive you.

Mar. That's more than I do, egad—"To the garden gate, huzza!" [*Drinks.*] But, I hope, you design to keep far enough off on't, Sir George.

Sir Geo. Ay, ay, never fear that; she shall see I despise her frowns; let her use the blunderbuss against the next fool; she sha'n't reach me with the smoke, I warrant her:—ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Ah, Charles, if you could receive a disappointment, thus *en cavalier*, one should have some comfort in being beat for you.

Cha. The fool comprehends nothing.

Sir Geo. Nor would I have him. Pr'ythee, take him along with thee.

Cha. Enough.

Sir Geo. I kiss both your hands—And now for the garden gate.

It's beauty gives the assignation there,
And love too powerful grows t' admit of fear.

[*Exit.*

Cha. Come, you shall go home with me.

[*Exit* CHARLES.

Mar. Egad, Charles's asking me to go home with him, gives me a shrewd suspicion there's more in the garden gate than I comprehend. Faith, I'll give him the drop, and away to Gardy's and find it out.

[*Exit.*

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ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

The Outside of SIR JEALOUS TRAFFIC'S *House.*—PATCH *Peeping out of the Door.*

Enter WHISPER.

Whisp. Ha! Mrs. Patch, this is a lucky minute, to find you so readily;—my master dies with impatience.

Patch. My lady imagined so, and by her orders, I have been scouting this hour in search of you, to inform you, that Sir Jealous has invited some friends to supper with him to-night, which gives an opportunity to your master to make use of his ladder of ropes. The closet window shall be open, and Isabinda ready to receive him. Bid him come immediately.

Whisp. Excellent! he'll not disappoint, I warrant him.—But hold, I have a letter here which I'm to carry an answer to. I can't think what language the direction is.

Patch. Pho! 'tis no language, but a character which the lovers invented to avert discovery—It is impossible you should have an answer: away, and bid him come himself for that. Begone, we're ruined if you're seen, for he has doubled his care since the last accident.

Whisp. I go, I go. [*Exit.*

Patch. There, go thou into my pocket. [*Puts it beside, and it falls down.*] Now I'll up the back stairs, lest I meet him.—Well, a dexterous chambermaid is the ladies' best utensil, I say. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS, *with a Letter in his Hand.*

Sir Jeal. So, this is some comfort; this tells me, that Signior Don Diego Babinetto, is safely arrived. He shall marry my daughter the minute he comes—Ha, ha! what's here? [*Takes up the Letter* PATCH *dropped.*] A letter!—I don't know what to make of the superscription. I'll see what's withinside.—— [*Opens it.*] Humph—'tis Hebrew, I think.—What can this mean?—There must be some trick in it. This was certainly designed for my daughter; but I don't know that she can speak any language but her mother tongue.—No matter for that, this may be one of love's hieroglyphics; and I fancy I saw Patch's tail sweep by: that wench may be a slut, and instead of guarding my honour, betray it. I'll find it out, I'm resolved—Who's there?

Enter THOMAS.

What answer did you bring from the gentlemen I sent you to invite?

Tho. That they'd all wait on you, sir, as I told you before; but I suppose you forgot, sir.

Sir Jeal. Did I so, sir? but I sha'n't forget to break your head, if any of them come, sir.

Tho. Come, sir!—why, did not you send me to desire their company, sir?

Sir Jeal. But I send you now, to desire their absence. Say, I have something extraordinary fallen out, which calls me abroad contrary to expectation, and ask their pardon;—and, d'ye hear, lay the cloth in my daughter's chamber, and bid the cook send supper thither presently.

Tho. Yes, sir.—Hey-day! what's the matter now? [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

ISABINDA'S *Chamber.*

ISABINDA *and* PATCH.

Isab. Are you sure nobody saw you speak to Whisper?

Patch. Yes, very sure, madam; but I heard Sir Jealous coming down stairs, so clapt his letter into my pocket. [*Feels for the Letter.*

Isab. A letter! give it me quickly.

Patch. Bless me! what's become on't——I'm sure I put it—— [*Searching still.*

Isab. Is it possible thou couldst be so careless?—Oh, I'm undone for ever, if it be lost.

Patch. I must have dropt it upon the stairs. But, why are you so much alarmed? if the worst happens, nobody can read it, madam, nor find out whom it was designed for.

Isab. If it falls into my father's hands, the very figure of a letter will produce ill consequences. Run and look for it upon the stairs this moment.

Patch. Nay, I'm sure it can be no where else—— [*As she is going out of the Door,*

Enter THOMAS.

How now, what do you want?

Tho. My master ordered me to lay the cloth here for supper.

Isab. Ruined, past redemption— [*Aside.*

Patch. You mistake, sure.—What shall we do?

Isab. I thought he expected company to-night—Oh, poor Charles! O, unfortunate Isabinda!

Tho. I thought so too, madam; but I suppose he has altered his mind. [*Lays the Cloth, and exit.*

Isab. The letter is the cause. This heedless action has undone me. Fly and fasten the closet window, which will give Charles notice to retire.—Ha! my father!—oh, confusion!——

Enter SIR JEALOUS.

Sir Jeal. Hold, hold, Patch! whither are you going? I'll have nobody stir out of the room till after supper.

Patch. Sir, I was going to reach your easy chair.

Sir Jeal. I'll have nobody stir out of the room. I don't want my easy chair.

Isab. What will be the event of this? [*Aside.*

Sir Jeal. Harkye, daughter, do you know this hand?

Isab. As I suspected——Hand, do you call it, sir? 'Tis some schoolboy's scrawl.

Patch. Oh, invention!—thou chambermaid's best friend, assist me!

Sir Jeal. Are you sure you don't understand it?

[PATCH *feels in her Bosom, and shakes her Coats.*

Isab. Do you understand it, sir?

Sir Jeal. I wish I did.

Isab. Thank Heaven you do not. [*Aside.*] Then I know no more of it than you do, indeed, sir.

Patch. Oh Lord, O Lord! what have you done, sir? why, the paper is mine. [*Snatching it from him.*

Sir Jeal. Ha! yours, mistress?

Patch. Yes, sir, it is.

Sir Jeal. What is it? speak.

Patch. Yes, sir, it is a charm for the toothache—I have worn it these seven years; 'twas given me by an angel, for aught I know, when I was raving with the pain; for nobody knew from whence he came, nor whither he went. He charged me never to open it, lest some dire vengeance befal me, and Heaven knows what will be the event. O cruel misfortune! that I

should drop it, and you should open it.—If you had not opened it——

Sir Jeal. Pox of your charms and whims, for me! if that be all, 'tis well enough. There, there, burn it, and I warrant you no vengeance will follow.

Patch. So all's right again, thus far. [*Aside.*

Isab. I would not lose Patch for the world—I'll take courage a little. [*Aside.*] Is this usage for your daughter, sir? must my virtue and conduct be suspected for every trifle? You immure me like some dire offender here, and deny me all the recreations which my sex enjoy, and the custom of the country, allow; yet, not content with that, you make my confinement more intolerable, by your mistrusts and jealousies. Would I were dead, so I were free from this.

Sir Jeal. To-morrow rids you of this tiresome load: Don Diego Babinetto will be here, and then my care ends, and his begins.

Isab. Is he come then?—Oh, how shall I avoid this hated marriage? [*Aside.*

Enter SERVANTS, *with Supper.*

Sir Jeal. Come, will you sit down?

Isab. I can't eat, sir.

Patch. No, I dare swear, he has given her supper enough. I wish I could get into the closet. [*Aside.*

Sir Jeal. Well, if you can't eat, then give me a song whilst I do.

Isab. I have such a cold, I can scarce speak, sir, much less sing.—How shall I prevent Charles coming in? [*Aside.*

Sir Jeal. I hope, you have the use of your fingers, madam. Play a tune upon your piano whilst your woman sings me a song.

Patch. I'm as much out of tune as my lady, if he knew all. [*Aside.*

Isab. I shall make excellent music.

[*Sits down to play.*

Patch. Really, sir, I am so frighted about your opening this charm, that I can't remember one song.

Sir Jeal. Pish! hang your charm! come, come, sing any thing.

Patch. Yes, I'm likely to sing, truly. [*Aside.*] Humph, humph; bless me! I can't raise my voice, my heart pants so. [*Sings a little.*

Sir Jeal. Why, what, does your heart pant so, that you can't play, neither? Pray what key are you in, ha?

Patch. Ah, would the key was turn'd on you, once. [*Aside.*

Sir Jeal. Why don't you sing, I say?

Patch. When madam has put her piano in tune, sir; humph, humph—

Isab. I cannot play, sir, whatever ails me. [*Rising.*

Sir Jeal. Zounds! both sing, or I'll break the piano about your ears.

Isab. What will become of me?

[*Sits down and plays.*

Sir Jeal. Come, mistress. [*To* PATCH.

Patch. Yes, sir. [*Sings, but horridly out of Tune.*

Sir Jeal. Hey, hey! why, you are a-top of the house, and you are down in the cellar. What is the meaning of this? is it on purpose to cross me, ha?

Patch. Pray, madam, take it a little lower; I cannot reach that note—nor any note, I fear. [*Sings.*

Cha. [*Opening the Closet Door.*] Music and singing!

'Tis thus the bright——

Sir Jeal. [*Rising up hastily, seeing* CHARLES *slip into the Closet.*] Hell and furies! a man in the closet!——

Patch. Ah! a ghost! a ghost!—He must not enter the closet!—

[ISABINDA *throws herself down before the Closet Door, as in a Swoon.*

Sir Jeal. The devil!—I'll make a ghost of him, I warrant you. [*Strives to get by.*

Patch. Oh, hold, sir,—have a care,—you'll tread upon my lady,—This comes of your opening the charm.—Oh, oh, oh, oh! [*Weeps aloud.*

Sir Jeal. I'll charm you, housewife.—Come out, you rascal, do so!—Zounds! take her from the door, or I'll spurn her from it, and break your neck down stairs. [*Goes into the Closet.*

Isab. He's gone! I heard him leap down. [*Aside, to* PATCH.

Enter SIR JEALOUS, *out of the Closet.*

Sir Jeal. Whoever the dog were, he has escaped out of the window, for the sash is up: but though he is got out of my reach, you are not. And first, Mrs. Pander, with your charms for the toothache, get out of my house,—go, troop: yet, hold, stay, I'll see you out of my doors myself;—but I'll secure your charge ere I go.

Isab. What do you mean, sir? was she not a creature of your own providing?

Sir Jeal. She was of the devil's providing, for aught I know.

Patch. What have I done, sir, to merit your displeasure?

Sir Jeal. I don't know which of you have done it, but you shall both suffer for it, till I can discover whose guilt it is. Go, get in there; I'll move you from this side of the house. [*Pushes* ISABINDA *in at the Door, and locks it, puts the Key in his Pocket.*] I'll keep the key myself.—I'll try what ghost will get into that room: and now, forsooth, I'll wait on you down stairs.

Patch. Ah, my poor lady!——Down stairs, sir!—but I won't go out, sir, till I have locked up my clothes.

Sir Jeal. If thou wert as naked as thou wert born,

thou shouldst not stay to put on a smock. Come along, I say. When your mistress is married, you shall have your rags, and every thing that belongs to you; but till then—

Patch. Oh, barbarous usage, for nothing!

Sir Jeal. There, go, and come no more within sight of my habitation these three days, I charge you.

[*Slaps the Door after her.—Exit.*

Patch. Did ever any body see such an old monster!

Enter CHARLES.

Oh, Mr. Charles! your affairs and mine are in an ill posture.

Cha. I am inured to the frowns of fortune; but what has befall'n thee?

Patch. Sir Jealous, whose suspicious nature is always on the watch; nay, even when one eye sleeps, the other keeps centinel; upon sight of you, flew into such a violent passion, that I could find no stratagem to appease him, but, in spite of all arguments, he locked his daughter into his own apartment, and turned me out of doors.

Cha. Ha! oh, Isabinda!

Patch. And swears, she shall see neither sun nor moon, till she is Don Diego Babinetto's wife, who arrived last night, and is expected with impatience.

Cha. He dies;—yes, by all the wrongs of love, he shall. Here will I plant myself, and through my breast he shall make his passage, if he enters.

Patch. A most heroic resolution! there might be ways found out more to your advantage: policy is often prefered to open force.

Cha. I apprehend you not.

Patch. What think you of personating this Spaniard, imposing upon the father, and marrying your mistress by his own consent?

Cha. Say'st thou so, my angel!—Oh, could that be done, my life to come, would be too short to recom-

pense thee:—but how can I do that, when I neither know what ship he came in, nor from what part of Spain, who recommends him, or how attended.

Patch. I can solve all this. He is from Madrid; his father's name Don Pedro Questo Portento Babinetto. I've a letter of his to Sir Jealous, which he dropt one day. You understand Spanish, and the hand may be counterfeited. You conceive me, sir.

Cha. My better genius! thou hast revived my drooping soul. I'll about it instantly. Come to my lodgings, and we'll concert matters. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Garden Gate, open; SCENTWELL *waiting within.*

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY.

Sir Geo. So, this is the gate, and most invitingly open. If there should be a blunderbuss here now, what a dreadful ditty would my fall make for fools, and what a jest for the wits; how my name would be roared about the streets!—Well, I'll venture all.—

Scent. [*Within.*] Hist, hist! Sir George Airy——

Sir Geo. A female voice!—thus far I'm safe.—My dear——

Enter SCENTWELL.

Scent. No, I'm not your dear, but I'll conduct you to her. Give me your hand; you must go through many a dark passage, and dirty step, before you arrive——

Sir Geo. I know I must, before I arrive at Paradise; therefore, be quick, my charming guide.

Scent. For aught you know. Come, come, your hand, and away.

Sir Geo. Here, here, child;—you can't be half so swift as my desires. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The House.

Enter MIRANDA.

Miran. Well, let me reason a little with my mad self. Now, don't I transgress all rules to venture upon a man, without the advice of the grave and wise! But then, a rigid, knavish guardian, who would have married me—to whom? even to his nauseous self, or nobody. Sir George is what I have tried in conversation, inquired into his character, and am satisfied in both. Then, his love! who would have given a hundred pounds, only to have seen a woman he had not infinitely lov'd? So, I find my liking him, has furnished me with arguments enough of his side; and now, the only doubt remains whether he will come or no.

Enter SCENTWELL *and* SIR GEORGE.

Scent. That's resolved, madam, for here's the knight. [*Exit* SCENTWELL.

Sir Geo. And do I once more behold that lovely object, whose idea fills my mind, and forms my pleasing dreams!

Miran. What, beginning again in heroics!——Sir George, don't you remember how little fruit your last prodigal oration produced? Not one bare single word in answer.

Sir Geo. Ha! the voice of my incognita!—Why did you take ten thousand ways to captivate a heart, your eyes alone had vanquished?

Miran. Do you think we can agree on that same terrible bugbear matrimony, without heartily repenting on both sides?

Sir Geo. It has been my wish since first my longing

eyes beheld you.—Haste then, and let us tie the knot, and prove the envy'd pair——

Miran. Hold, not so fast! I have provided better than to venture on dangerous experiments headlong ——My Guardian, trusting to my dissembled love, has given up my fortune to my own disposal, but with this proviso, that he to-morrow morning weds me. He is now gone to Doctors' Commons for a license.

Sir Geo. Ha! a licence!

Miran. But I have planted emissaries that infallibly take him down to Epsom, under a pretence that a brother usurer of his is to make him his executor, the thing on earth he covets.

Sir Geo. 'Tis his known character.

Miran. Now, my instruments confirm him this man is dying, and he sends me word he goes this minute. It must be to-morrow ere he can be undeceived: that time is ours.

Sir Geo. Let us improve it then, and settle on our coming years endless, endless happiness.

Miran. I dare not stir till I hear he's on the road ——then I and my writings, the most material point, are soon removed.

Sir Geo. I have one favour to ask: If it lies in your power you would be a friend to poor Charles?

Miran. I never was his enemy, and only put it on as it help'd my designs on his father. If his uncle's estate ought to be in his possession, which I shrewdly suspect, I may do him a singular piece of service.

Sir Geo. You are all goodness.

Enter SCENTWELL.

Scent. Oh, madam! my master and Mr. Marplot are just coming into the house.

Miran. Undone, undone! if he finds you here in this crisis, all my plots are unravell'd.

Sir Geo. What shall I do? can't I get back into the garden?

Scent. Oh no! he comes up those stairs.

Miran. Here, here, here! can you condescend to stand behind this chimneyboard, Sir George?

Sir Geo. Any where, any where, dear madam! without ceremony.

Scent. Come, come, sir, lie close——

[*They put him behind the Chimneyboard.*

Enter SIR FRANCIS *and* MARPLOT; SIR FRANCIS *peeling an Orange.*

Sir Fran. I cou'd not go, though 'tis upon life and death, without taking leave of dear Chargy. Besides, this fellow buzz'd into my ears that thou might'st be so desperate as to shoot that wild rake which haunts the garden gate, and that would bring us into trouble, dear——

Miran. So, Marplot brought you back then?

Mar. Yes, I brought him back.

Miran. I'm oblig'd to him for that, I'm sure.

[*Frowning at* MARPLOT *aside.*

Mar. By her looks she means she's not oblig'd to me. I have done some mischief now, but what I can't imagine.

Sir Fran. Well, Chargy, I have had three messengers to come to Epsom to my neighbour Squeezum's, who, for all his vast riches, is departing. [*Sighs.*

Mar. Ay, see what all you usurers must come to.

Sir Fran. Peace, you young knave! Some forty years hence I may think on't—But, chargy, Ill be with thee to-morrow before those pretty eyes are open; I will, I will, Chargy; I'll rouse you, i'faith;—Here, Mrs. Scentwell, lift up your lady's chimneyboard, that I may throw my peel in, and not litter her chamber.

Miran. Oh, my stars! what will become of us now?

Scent. Oh, pray, sir, give it me; I love it above all things in nature; indeed I do.

Sir Fran. No, no, hussey; you have the green pip already; I'll have no apothecary's bills.

[*Goes towards the Chimney.*

Miran. Hold, hold, hold, dear Gardy! I have a, a, a, a, monkey shut up there, and if you open it before the man comes that is to tame it, 'tis so wild, 'twill break all my china, or get away, and that would break my heart; for I'm fond on't to distraction, next thee, dear Gardy! [*In a flattering Tone.*

Sir Fran. Well, well, Chargy, I won't open it; she shall have her monkey, poor rogue! Here, throw this peel out of the window. [*Exit* SCENTWELL.

Mar. A monkey! dear madam, let me see it; I can tame a monkey as well as the best of them all. Oh, how I love the little miniatures of man!

Miran. Be quiet, mischief! and stand farther from the chimney——You shall not see my monkey—why, sure— [*Striving with him.*

Mar. For Heaven's sake, dear madam! let me but peep, to see if it be as pretty as Lady Fiddle Faddle's. Has it got a chain?

Miran. Not yet, but I design it one shall last its lifetime. Nay, you shall not see it.——Look, Gardy, how he teazes me!

Sir Fran. [*Getting between him and the Chimney.*] Sirrah, sirrah, let my Chargy's monkey alone, or bamboo shall fly about your ears. What! is there no dealing with you!

Mar. Pugh, pox of the monkey! here's a rout! I wish he may rival you.

Enter WILLIAM.

Will. Sir, the coach is ready at the door.

Sir Fran. Well, I am going to be executor; better for thee, jewel. B'ye, Chargy; one buss!—I'm glad thou hast got a monkey to divert thee a little.

Miran. Thank'e, dear Gardy!—Nay, I'll see you to the coach.

Sir Fran. That's kind, adad.

Miran. Come along, Impertinence. [*To* MAR.

[*Exeunt* SIR FRANCIS *and* MIRANDA.

Mar. [*Stepping back.*] Egad, I will see the monkey now. [*Lifts up the Board, and discovers* SIR GEORGE.] O Lord! O Lord! Thieves! thieves! murder!

Sir Geo. Damn ye, you unlucky dog! 'tis I. Which way shall I get out? Show me instantly, or I'll cut your throat.

Mar. Undone, undone! At that door there. But hold, hold; break that china, and—I'll bring you off.

[*He runs off at the Corner, and throws down some China.*

Re-enter SIR FRANCIS, MIRANDA, *and* SCENTWELL.

Sir Fran. Mercy on me! what's the matter?

Miran. O, you toad! what have you done?

Mar. No great harm; I beg of you to forgive me. Longing to see the monkey, I did but just raise up the board, and it flew over my shoulders, scratch'd all my face, broke yon china, and whisked out of the window.

Sir Fran. Where where is it, sirrah?

Mar. There, there, Sir Francis, upon your neighbour Parmazan's pantiles.

Sir Fran. Was ever such an unlucky rogue! Sirrah, I forbid you my house. Call the servants to get the monkey again. Pug, Pug, Pug! I would stay myself to look it, but that you know my earnest business.

Miran. Go, go, dear Gardy! I hope I shall recover it.

Sir Fran. B'ye, b'ye, dearee! Ah, Mischief! how you look now! B'ye, b'ye. [*Exit.*

Miran. Scentwell, see him in the coach, and bring me word.

Scent. Yes, madam. [*Exit.*

Miran. So, sir, you have done your friend a signal piece of service, I suppose.

Mar. Why, look you, madam, if I have committed a fault, thank yourself; no man is more serviceable when I am let into a secret, and none more unlucky at finding it out. Who cou'd divine your meaning? when you talked of a blunderbuss, who thought of a rendezvous? and when you talked of a monkey, who the devil dreamt of Sir George?

Miran. A sign you converse but little with our sex, when you can't reconcile contradictions.

Enter SCENTWELL.

Scent. He's gone, madam, as fast as the coach and six can carry him.

Enter SIR GEORGE.

Sir Geo. Then I may appear.

Mar. Here's Pug, ma'am—Dear Sir George! make my peace. On my soul, I never took you for a monkey before.

Sir Geo. I dare swear thou didst not. Madam, I beg you to forgive him.

Miran. Well, Sir George, if he can be secret.

Mar. 'Odsheart, madam! I'm as secret as a priest, when trusted.

Sir Geo. Why, 'tis with a priest our business is at present.

Scent. Madam, here's Mrs. Isabinda's woman to wait on you.

Miran. Bring her up.

Mar. Bring her up. Let us hear what she wants.

Enter PATCH.

Miran. How do you, Mrs. Patch! What news from your lady?

Patch. That's for your private ear, madam. Sir

George, there's a friend of yours has an urgent occasion for your assistance.

Sir Geo. His name?

Mar. His name?

Patch. Charles.

Mar. Ha! I'll wait on you, Sir George.

Sir Geo. A third person may not be proper, perhaps. As soon as I have despatched my own affairs, I am at his service. I'll send my servant to tell him I'll wait on him in half an hour.

Miran. How came you employed in this message, Mrs. Patch?

Mar. Ay, how were you employed?

Patch. Want of business, madam; I am discharged by my master, but hope to serve my lady still.

Miran. How! discharg'd! you must tell me the whole story within.

Patch. With all my heart, madam.

Mar. Tell it here, Mrs. Patch. Pish, Pox! I wish I were fairly out of the house. I find marriage is the end of this secret; and now I am half mad to know what Charles wants him for. [*Aside.*

Sir Geo. Madam, I'm doubly press'd by love and friendship. This exigence admits of no delay. Shall we make Marplot of the party?

Miran. If you'll run the hazard, Sir George; I believe he means well.

Mar. Nay, nay; for my part, I desire to be let into nothing; I'll be gone; therefore, pray, don't mistrust me. [*Going.*

Sir Geo. So, now he has a mind to be gone to Charles. No, Mr. Marplot, you must not leave us; we want a third person. [*Takes hold of him.*

Mar. I never had more mind to be gone in my life.

Miran. Come along then; if we fail in the voyage, thank yourself for taking this ill-starr'd gentleman on board.

Sir Geo. That vessel ne'er can unsuccessful prove,
Whose freight is beauty, and whose pilot's love.
[*Exeunt* SIR GEORGE *and* MIRANDA.

Mar. Tyty ti, tyty ti. [*Steals off the other Way.*

Re-enter SIR GEORGE.

Sir Geo. Marplot! Marplot!

Mar. [*Entering.*] Here! I was coming, Sir George. Lord, can't you let one tie up one's garter? [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

The House.

Enter MIRANDA, PATCH, *and* SCENTWELL.

Miran. Well, Patch, I have done a strange bold thing; my fate is determin'd, and expectation is no more. Now, to avoid the impertinence and roguery of an old man, I have thrown myself into the extravagance of a young one; if he should despise, slight, or use me ill, there's no remedy from a husband but the grave, and that's a terrible sanctuary.

Patch. O! fear not, madam: you'll find your account in Sir George Airy.

Miran. I long till I am out of this house, lest any accident should bring my guardian back. Scentwell, put my best jewels into the little casket, slip them into thy pocket, and let us march off to Sir Jealous's.

Scent. It shall be done, madam. [*Exit* SCENT.

Patch. Sir George will be impatient, madam. If their plot succeeds, we shall be well received; if not,

he will be able to protect us. Besides, I long to know how my young lady fares.

Miran. Farewell, old Mammon, and thy detested walls! 'Twill be no more sweet Sir Francis! I shall be compell'd the odious task of dissembling no longer to get my own, and coax him with the wheedling names of my precious, my dear, dear Gardy! O Heav'ns!

Enter SIR FRANCIS *behind.*

Sir Fran. Ah, my sweet Chargy! don't be frighted: [*She starts.*] but thy poor Gardy has been abus'd, cheated, fool'd, betray'd; but nobody knows by whom.

Miran. Undone, past redemption! [*Aside.*

Sir Fran. What, won't you speak to me, Chargy?

Miran. I am so surprised with joy to see you, I know not what to say.

Sir Fran. Poor dear girl! But do you know that my son, or some such rogue, to rob or murder me, or both, contrived this journey? for upon the road I met my neighbour Squeezum well, and coming to town.

Miran. Good lack! good lack! what tricks are there in this world?

Enter SCENTWELL, *with a Diamond Necklace in her Hand, not seeing* SIR FRANCIS.

Scent. Madam, be pleas'd to tie this necklace on, for I can't get it into the— [*Seeing* SIR FRANCIS.

Miran. The wench is a fool, I think! could you not have carried it to be mended without putting it in the box?

Sir Fran. What's the matter?

Miran. Only, dearee! I bid her, I bid her—Your ill usage has put every thing out of my head. But won't you go, Gardy, and find out these fellows, and have them punished? and, and—

Sir Fran. Where should I look for them, child? No, I'll sit me down contented with my safety, nor stir out of my own doors till I go with thee to a parson.

Miran. [*Aside.*] If he goes into his closet, I am ruin'd. Oh, bless me, in this fright I had forgot Mrs. Patch.

Patch. Ay, madam, and I stay for your speedy answer.

Miran. [*Aside.*] I must get him out of the house. Now assist me, Fortune!

Sir Fran. Mrs. Patch! I profess I did not see you: how dost thou do, Mrs. Patch? Well, don't you repent leaving my Chargy?

Patch. Yes, every body must love her—but I come now——Madam, what did I come for? my invention is at the last ebb. [*Aside to* MIRANDA.

Sir Fran. Nay, never whisper, tell me.

Miran. She came, dear Gardy! to invite me to her lady's wedding, and you shall go with me, Gardy; 'tis to be done this moment, to a Spanish merchant. Old Sir Jealous keeps on his humour; the first minute he sees her, the next he marries her.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha, ha! I'd go, if I thought the sight of matrimony would tempt Chargy to perform her promise. There was a smile, there was a consenting look, with those pretty twinklers, worth a million! 'Ods-precious! I am happier than the Great Mogul, the Emperor of China, or all the potentates that are not in wars. Speak, confirm it, make me leap out of my skin.

Miran. When one has resolved, 'tis in vain to stand shilly-shally. If ever I marry, positively this is my wedding day.

Sir Fran. O happy, happy man!—Verily, I will beget a son the first night shall disinherit that dog Charles. I have estate enough to purchase a barony,

and be the immortalizing the whole family of the Gripes.

Miran. Come then, Gardy, give me thy hand; let's to this house of Hymen.

My choice is fix'd, let good or ill betide.
Sir Fran. The joyful bridegroom I,
Miran. And I the bride. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

SIR JEALOUS TRAFFIC'S *House.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS, *meeting* THOMAS.

Tho. Sir, here's a couple of gentlemen inquire for you; one of them calls himself Signior Diego Babinetto.

Sir Jeal. Ha! Signior Babinetto! admit 'em instantly—joyful minute; I'll have my daughter married to-night.

Enter CHARLES *in a Spanish Habit, with* SIR GEORGE *dressed like a Merchant.*

Sir Jeal. Senhor, beso las manos: vuestra merced es muy bien venido en esta tierra.

Cha. Senhor, soy muy humilde, y muy obligado cryado de vuestra merced: mi padre embia a vuestra merced, los mas profondos de sus respetos; y a commissionado este mercadel Ingles, de concluyr un negocio, que me haze el mas dichoss hombre del mundo, haziendo me su yerno.

Sir Jeal. I am glad on't, for I find I have lost much of my Spanish. Sir, I am your most humble servant. Signior Don Diego Babinetto has informed me that you are commissioned by Signior Don Pedro, &c. his worthy father——

Sir Geo. To see an affair of marriage consummated between a daughter of yours, and Signior Diego Babinetto, his son here. True, sir, such a trust is reposed in me, as that letter will inform you. I hope 'twill pass upon him. [*Aside.*] [*Gives him a Letter.*

Sir Jeal. Ay, 'tis his hand. [*Seems to read.*

Sir Geo. Good, you have counterfeited to a nicety, Charles. [*Aside to* CHARLES.

Cha. If the whole plot succeeds as well I'm happy.

Sir Jeal. Sir, I find by this that you are a man of honour and probity; I think, sir, he calls you Meanwell.

Sir Geo. Meanwell is my name, sir.

Sir Jeal. A very good name, and very significant; for to mean well is to be honest, and to be honest is the virtue of a friend, and a friend is the delight and support of human society.

Sir Geo. You shall find that I'll discharge the part of a friend in what I have undertaken, Sir Jealous. Therefore, sir, I must entreat the presence of your fair daughter, and the assistance of your chaplain; for Signior Don Pedro strictly enjoined me to see the marriage rites performed as soon as we should arrive, to avoid the accidental overtures of Venus.

Sir Jeal. Overtures of Venus!

Sir Geo. Ay, sir; that is, those little hawking females that traverse the Park and the Playhouse to put off their damaged ware—they fasten upon foreigners like leeches, and watch their arrival as carefully as the Kentish men do a shipwreck: I warrant you they have heard of him already.

Sir Jeal. Nay, I know this town swarms with them.

Sir Geo. Ay, and then you know the Spaniards are naturally amorous, but very constant; the first face fixes 'em; and it may be very dangerous to let him ramble ere he is tied.

Sir Jeal. Pat to my purpose—Well, sir, there is

but one thing more, and they shall be married instantly. Don Pedro writ me word, in his last but one, that he designed the sum of five thousand crowns by way of jointure for my daughter, and that it should be paid into my hand upon the day of marriage—

Cha. O the devil! [*Aside.*

Sir Jeal. In order to lodge it in some of our funds, in case she should become a widow, and return for England——

Sir Geo. Pox on't! this is an unlucky turn. What shall I say? [*Aside.*

Sir Jeal. And he does not mention one word of it in this letter.

Sir Geo. Humph! True, Sir Jealous, he told me such a thing, but, but, but, but—he, he, he, he—he did not imagine that you would insist upon the very day; for, for, for, for money, you know, is dangerous returning by sea, an, an, an, an—

Cha. Zounds! say we have brought it in commodities. [*Aside to* SIR GEORGE.

Sir Geo. And so, sir, he has sent it in merchandize; tobacco, sugars, spices, lemons, and so forth, which shall be turned into money with all expedition: in the mean time, sir, if you please to accept of my bond for performance——

Sir Jeal. It is enough, sir; I am so pleased with the countenance of Signior Diego, and the harmony of your name, that I'll take your word, and will fetch my daughter this moment. Within there!

Enter SERVANT.

Desire Mr. Tackum, my neighbour's chaplain, to walk hither.

Serv. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

Sir Jeal. Gentlemen, I'll return in an instant. [*Exit.*

Cha. Wond'rous well! let me embrace thee.

Sir Geo. Egad, that five thousand crowns had like to have ruined the plot.

Cha. But that's over; and if Fortune throws no more rubs in our way——

Sir Geo. Thou'lt carry the prize——But hist! here he comes.

Enter SIR JEALOUS, *dragging in* ISABINDA.

Sir Jeal. Come along, you stubborn baggage you! come along.

Isab. Oh! hear me, sir, hear me but speak one word;
Do not destroy my everlasting peace;
My soul abhors this Spaniard you have chose.

Sir Jeal. How's that!

Isab. Let this posture move your tender nature.
[*Kneels.*
For ever will I hang upon these knees,
Nor loose my hands till you cut off my hold,
If you refuse to hear me, sir.

Sir Jeal. Off, I say. Mr. Meanwell, pray help me a little.

Sir Geo. Rise, madam, and do not disoblige your father, who has provided a husband worthy of you, one that will love you equal with his soul, and one that you will love, when once you know him.

Isab. Oh! never, never!
Could I suspect that falsehood in my heart,
I would this moment tear it from my breast,
And straight present him with the treach'rous part.

Sir Jeal. Falsehood! Why, who the devil are you in love with? Don't provoke me; for, by St. Iago, I shall beat you, housewife.

Cha. Heaven forbid! for I shall infallibly discover myself if he should.

Sir Geo. Have patience, madam, and look at him: why will ye prepossess yourself against a man that is master of all the charms you would desire in a husband.

Sir Jeal. Ay, look at him, Isabinda. Is there a properer, handsomer, better shaped fellow in England,

ye jade you? Ha! see, see the obstinate baggage shuts her eyes; by St. Iago, I have a good mind to beat 'em out. [*Pushes her down.*

Isab. Do then, sir, kill me, kill me instantly;
'Tis much the kinder action of the two,
For 'twill be worse than death to wed him.

Sir Geo. Sir Jealous, you are too passionate. Give me leave, I'll try by gentle words to work her to your purpose.

Sir Jeal. I pray do, Mr. Meanwell, I pray do; she'll break my heart. [*Weeps.*] There is in that box jewels of the value of three thousand pounds, which were her mother's, and a paper wherein I have settled one half of my estate upon her now, and the whole when I die, but provided she marries this gentleman, else, by St. Iago, I'll turn her out of doors to beg or starve. Tell her this, Mr. Meanwell, pray do.

[*Walks aside.*

Sir Geo. Come, madam, do not blindly cast your life away, just in the moment you would wish to save it.

Isab. Pray cease your trouble, sir; I have no wish but sudden death to free me from this hated Spaniard. If you are his friend, inform him what I say; my heart is given to another youth, whom I love with the same strength of passion that I hate this Diego, with whom, if I am forced to wed, my own hand shall cut the Gordian knot.

Sir Geo. Suppose this Spaniard, which you strive to shun, should be the very man to whom you'd fly?

Isab. Ha!

Sir Geo. Would you not blame your rash resolve, and curse your eyes that would not look on Charles?

Isab. On Charles! Where is he? O, let me fly into his arms! [*Rises.*

Sir Geo. Hold, hold, hold. 'Sdeath! madam, you'll ruin all. Your father believes him to be Signior Babinetto. Compose yourself a little, pray madam. [*He runs to* SIR JEALOUS.] She begins to hear reason,

sir; the fear of being turned out of doors has done it.
[*Runs back to* ISABINDA.

Sir Jeal. Well, Isabinda, can you refuse to bless a father, whose only care is to make you happy, as Mr. Meanwell has informed you? Come, wipe thy eyes; nay, pr'ythee do, or thou wilt break thy father's heart. See, thou bring'st the tears in mine, to think of thy undutiful carriage to me. [*Weeps.*

Isab. Oh, do not weep, sir; your tears are like a poignard to my soul. Do with me what you please; I am all obedience.

Sir Jeal. Ha! then thou art my child again.

Sir Geo. 'Tis done; and now, friend, the day's thy own.

Sir Jeal. And wilt thou love him?

Isab. I will endeavour it, sir.

Enter THOMAS.

Tho. Sir, here is Mr. Tackum.

Sir Jeal. Show him into the parlour. Now, Mr. Meanwell, let's to the parson,

Who, by his art, will join this pair for life,
Make me the happiest father, her the happiest wife.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The Street before SIR JEALOUS'S *Door.*

Enter MARPLOT,

Mar. I have hunted all over the town for Charles, but can't find him, and by Whisper's scouting at the end of the street, I suspect he must be in the house again. I am informed, too, that he has borrowed a Spanish habit out of the playhouse: what can it mean?

Enter THOMAS.

Hark'e, sir, do you belong to this house?

Tho. Yes, sir.

Mar. Isn't your name Richard?

Tho. No, sir, Thomas.

Mar. Oh, ay, Thomas—Well, Thomas, there's a shilling for you.

Tho. Thank you, sir.

Mar. Pray, Thomas, can you tell if there be a gentleman in it in a Spanish habit?

Tho. There's a Spanish gentleman within, that is just a-going to marry my young lady, sir.

Mar. Are you sure he is a Spanish gentleman?

Tho. I'm sure he speaks no English, that I hear of.

Tho. Then that can't be him I want, for 'tis an English gentleman that I inquire after; he may be dressed like a Spaniard for ought I know.

Tho. Ha! who knows but this may be an impostor? I'll inform my master, for if he should be imposed upon, he'll beat us all round. [*Aside.*] Pray come in, sir, and see if this be the person you inquire for.

Mar. Ay, I'll follow you—Now for it. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Inside of the House.

Enter MARPLOT *and* THOMAS.

Tho. Sir, please to stay here, I'll send my master to you. [*Exit.*

Mar. So, this was a good contrivance. If this be Charles now, he will wonder how I found him out.

Enter THOMAS *and* SIR JEALOUS.

Sir Jeal. What is your earnest business, block-

head! that you must speak with me before the ceremony's past? Ha! who's this?

Tho. Why, this gentleman, sir, wants another gentleman in a Spanish habit, he says.

Sir Jeal. In a Spanish habit! 'tis some friend of Signior Don Diego's, I warrant. Sir, your servant.

Mar. Your servant, sir.

Sir Jeal. I suppose you would speak with Signior Babinetto?

Mar. Sir!

Sir Jeal. I say, I suppose you would speak with Signior Babinetto?

Mar. Hey day! what the devil does he say now?—Sir, I don't understand you.

Sir Jeal. Don't you understand Spanish, sir?

Mar. Not I, indeed, sir.

Sir Jeal. I thought you had known Signior Babinetto?

Mar. Not I, upon my word, sir.

Sir Jeal. What then, you'd speak with his friend, the English merchant, Mr. Meanwell?

Mar. Neither, sir, not I; I don't mean any such thing.

Sir Jeal. Why, who are you then, sir? and what do you want? [*In an angry Tone.*

Mar. Nay, nothing at all, not I, sir.—Pox on him! I wish I were out; he begins to exalt his voice;—I shall be beaten again. [*Aside.*

Sir Jeal. Nothing at all, sir! Why then, what business have you in my house? ha!

Tho. You said you wanted a gentleman in a Spanish habit.

Mar. Why, ay, but his name is neither Babinetto, nor Meanwell.

Sir Jeal. What is his name then, sirrah?—Ha! now I look at you again, I believe you are the rogue that threatened me with half a dozen myrmidons—Speak, sir, who is it you look for? or, or——

Mar. A terrible old dog!—Why, sir, only an honest young fellow of my acquaintance.—I thought that here might be a ball, and that he might have been here in a masquerade. 'Tis Charles, Sir Francis Gripe's son,—because I know he used to come hither sometimes.

Sir Jeal. Did he so?——not that I know of, I'm sure.—Pray Heaven, that this be Don Diego——If I should be tricked now—Ha! my heart misgives me plaguily——Within there! stop the marriage——Run, sirrah, call all my servants! I'll be satisfied, that this is Signior Pedro's son, ere he has my daughter.

Mar. Ha! Sir George! What have I done now?

Enter SIR GEORGE, *with a drawn Sword.*

Sir Geo. Ha! Marplot here—oh, the unlucky dog! What's the matter, Sir Jealous?

Enter SERVANTS.

Sir Jeal. Nay, I don't know the matter, Mr. Meanwell.

Mar. Upon my soul, Sir George—it——

[*Going up to* SIR GEORGE.

Sir Jeal. It's Sir George, is it? Nay, then I'm betray'd, ruin'd, undone.—Thieves, traitors, rogues!—[*Offers to go in.*] Stop the marriage, I say——

Sir Geo. I say, go on, Mr. Tackum.—Nay, no entering here; I guard this passage, old gentleman:—the act and deed were both your own, and I'll see them sign'd, or die for't.

Sir Jeal. Zounds! sirrah, I'll be reveng'd on you.

[*Beats* MARPLOT.

Sir Geo. Ay, there your vengeance is due. Ha, ha!

Mar. Why, what do you beat me for? I ha'n't marry'd your daughter.

Sir Jeal. Rascals! why don't you knock him down?

Serv. We are afraid of his sword, sir: if you'll take that from him, we'll knock him down presently.

Enter CHARLES *and* ISABINDA.

Sir Jeal. Seize her, then.

Cha. Rascals! retire; she's my wife; touch her if you dare;—I'll make dogs' meat of you.

Mar. Ay, I'll make dogs' meat of you, rascal.

Sir Jeal. Ah! downright English—Oh, oh, oh, oh!

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE, MIRANDA, PATCH, SCENTWELL, *and* WHISPER.

Sir Fran. Into the house of joy we enter without knocking——Ha! I think 'tis the house of sorrow, Sir Jealous.

Sir Jeal. Oh, Sir Francis, are you come?—What! was this your contrivance, to abuse, trick, and chouse me out of my child?

Sir Fran. My contrivance! what do you mean?

Sir Jeal. No, you don't know your son there in a Spanish habit!

Sir Fran. How! my son in a Spanish habit! Sirrah, you'll come to be hang'd. Get out of my sight, ye dog! get out of my sight.

Sir Jeal. Get out of your sight, sir! get out with your bags. Let's see what you'll give him now to maintain my daughter on.

Sir Fran. Give him! he shall never be the better for a penny of mine—and you might have look'd after your daughter better, Sir Jealous, Trick'd, quotha! Egad I think you design'd to trick me: but look ye, gentlemen, I believe I shall trick you both.

Sir Geo. I shall be extremely obliged to you, Sir Francis.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha, ha! poor Sir George! you see your project was of no use: does not your hundred pound stick in your stomach? ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. No faith, Sir Francis, this lady has given me a cordial for that. [*Takes her by the Hand.*

Sir Fran. Hold, sir, you have nothing to say to this lady.

Sir Geo. Nor you nothing to do with my wife, sir.

Sir Fran. Wife, sir!

Miran. Ay, really, Guardian, 'tis even so. I hope you'll forgive my first offence.

Sir Fran. What, have you chous'd me out of my consent and your writings, then, mistress, ha?

Miran. Out of nothing but my own, Guardian.

Sir Jeal. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis some comfort at least to see you are over-reach'd as well as myself. Will you settle your estate upon your son now?

Sir Fran. He shall starve first.

Miran. That I have taken care to prevent. There, sir, are the writings of your uncle's estate, which have been your due these three years.

[*Gives* CHARLES *Papers.*

Cha. I shall study to deserve this favour.

Mar. Now, how the devil could she get those writings, and I know nothing of it.

Sir Fran. What, have you robb'd me too, mistress? egad I'll make you restore 'em—hussy, I will so.

Sir Jeal. Take care I don't make you pay the arrears, sir. 'Tis well 'tis no worse, since 'tis no better. Come, young man, seeing thou hast outwitted me, take her, and bless you both!

Cha. I hope, sir, you'll bestow your blessing too; 'tis all I ask. [*Kneels.*

Mar. Do, Gardy, do.

Sir Fran. Confound you all! [*Exit.*

Mar. Mercy upon us, how he looks!

Sir Geo. Ha, ha, ha! ne'er mind his curses, Charles, thou'lt thrive not one jot the worse for 'em. Since this gentleman is reconcil'd, we are all made happy.

Sir Jeal. I always lov'd precaution, and took care

to avoid dangers; but when a thing was past, I ever had philosophy to be easy.

Cha. Which is the true sign of a great soul. I lov'd your daughter, and she me, and you shall have no reason to repent her choice.

Mar. So, here's every body happy. I find but poor Pilgarlick. I wonder what satisfaction I shall have for being cuff'd, kick'd, and beaten in your service?

Sir Jeal. I have been a little too familiar with you, as things are fallen out; but since there's no help for't, you must forgive me.

Mar. Egad I think so—but provided that you be not so familiar for the future.

Sir Geo. Thou hast been an unlucky rogue.

Mar. But very honest.

Cha. That I'll vouch for, and freely forgive thee.

Sir Geo. And I'll do you one piece of service more, Marplot; I'll take care that Sir Francis makes you master of your estate.

Mar. That will make me as happy as any of you.

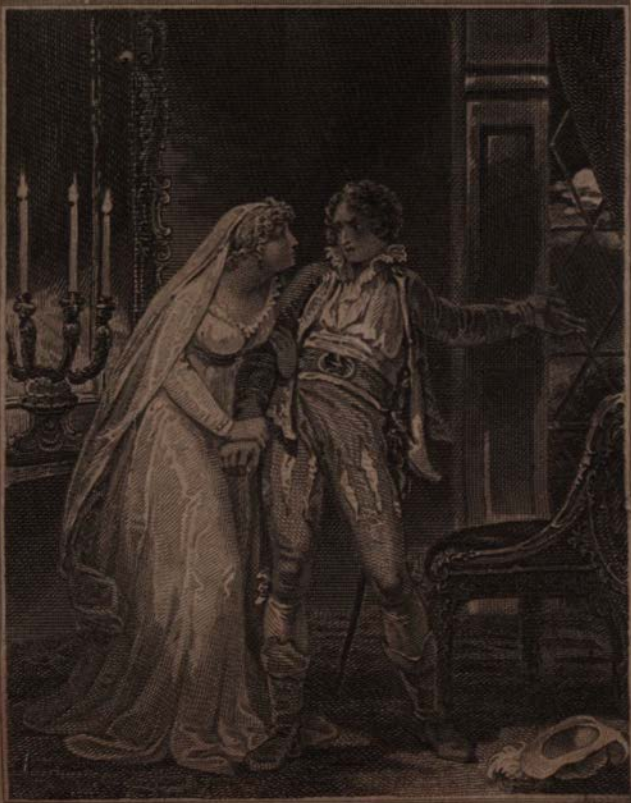
Sir Jeal. Now let us in, and refresh ourselves with a cheerful glass, in which we'll bury all animosities: and

By my example let all parents move,
And never strive to cross their children's love:
But still submit that care to Providence above.

[*Exeunt.*

THE END.

WONDER.



DON FELIX — PRAY LET ME GO MADAM, CONSIDER THE GENTLEMAN WANTS YOU AT THE WINDOW.

ACT II. SCENE I.

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1807.

THE WONDER

A WOMAN KEEPS A SECRET;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

By Mrs. CENTLIVRE.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY Mrs. INCHBALD.

Ll j. 2

LONDON:

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REMARKS.

Mrs. Centlivre, who wrote this comedy, and of whose life a short account has been given in the remarks upon her play of "The Busy Body," ranks in the first class of our comic dramatists: for though she does not possess the repartee of Congreve or Wycherly, and her dialogue, in general, is not equal even to Farquhar's, yet she discovers such happy invention in her plots, incidents, and characters; such skill in conducting the intrigues of a comedy; such art in exciting the curiosity, the anxiety, or the mirth of her auditors, that she foils both the scholar and the wit when the comparison is limited to theatrical effect.

Congreve abandoned his occupation as a dramatist in violent anger, because his "Way of the World" appeared, and was totally neglected, at the very time that a comedy by Mrs. Centlivre was brought forth, and attracted, for thirteen nights successively, a crowded theatre.

Merely as writers, the author of "The Way of the World," and the authoress of "The Wonder," hold distinct places among the literati; but as plays are productions that depend on action, and require

talents of a nature, in which writing has, perhaps, the smallest share, Mrs. Centlivre has, from the time she commenced dramatic author to the present day, through all the vicissitudes of taste which have, in that period, intervened, still been more attractive on the stage than the great poet whom her success offended.

This comedy is by far her best work. In excellence of fable, strength of character, and intricacy of occurrence, it forms one of the most entertaining exhibitions the theatre can boast.

Garrick thought Don Felix worthy his most powerful exertions, in describing the passion of jealousy; and this character was upon the list with the favourite parts he performed.

Though the scene is in Spain, and all the manners particularly adapted to that country, "The Wonder" shows the various passions and sensations of all mankind. The very servants are objects of attention and curiosity; nor is the humour they produce ever so degraded and ludicrous, as to diminish the effect of the more refined comedy of the higher personages.

Most comic writers of the present time accomplish the tedious labour of a five act drama by having recourse, alternately, to sentiment and drollery: here a long play is sustained without excursions to either; and yet, its consistency in adhering to one fixed point of entertainment, never creates satiety, nor shows a languor of invention in the author, which for a moment leaves the expectation of the auditor

unemployed, or leaves that expectation in one single instance disappointed.

Violante, in keeping a secret, is a heroine of the very first quality. To kill a tyrant, or to kill herself, is the common furious deed of a common stage virago: but for a female to hold her tongue, is a cool act of deliberate fortitude; and nothing but the improbability of the occurrence, can lessen its value with the most severe critic.

Mrs. Centlivre has somewhere said, that—"The Muses, like most females, are least liberal to their own sex." She was ungrateful if she did not acknowledge her obligations to them in the composition of this work; for they presided, with no niggardly influence, over the whole production.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON LOPEZ	*Mr. Murray.*
DON FELIX	*Mr. Kemble.*
DON PEDRO	*Mr. Munden.*
COLONEL BRITON	*Mr. Hargrave.*
FREDERICK	*Mr. Claremont.*
ALGUAZIL	*Mr. Davenport.*
OFFICERS	*Mr. Sarjant.*
	Mr. Powers.
GIBBY	*Mr. Emery.*
LISSARDO	*Mr. Fawcett.*
SANCHO	*Mr. Abbot.*
VASQUEZ	*Mr. Klanert.*
DIEGO	*Mr. L. Bologna.*
RAMON	*Mr. Lewiss.*
ISABELLA	*Miss Marriot.*
VIOLANTE	*Mrs. Glover.*
FLORA	*Mrs. Mattocks.*
INIS	*Mrs. Beverly.*

SCENE—Lisbon.

THE WONDER

A WOMAN KEEPS A SECRET.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Street.

Enter DON LOPEZ, *meeting* FREDERICK.

Fred. My lord, Don Lopez.

Lop. How d'ye, Frederick?

Fred. At your lordship's service. I am glad to see you look so well, my lord. I hope Antonio's out of danger?

Lop. Quite contrary; his fever increases, they tell me; and the surgeons are of opinion his wound is mortal.

Fred. Your son, Don Felix, is safe, I hope?

Lop. I hope so too; but they offer large rewards to apprehend him.

Fred. When heard your lordship from him?

Lop. Not since he went: I forbade him writing, till the public news gave him an account of Antonio's

health. Letters might be intercepted, and the place of his abode discovered.

Fred. Your caution was good, my lord. Though I am impatient to hear from Felix, yet his safety is my chief concern.

Lop. If Antonio dies, Felix shall for England.—You have been there; what sort of people are the English?

Fred. My lord, the English are by nature, what the ancient Romans were by discipline—courageous, bold, hardy, and in love with liberty.

Lop. I like their principles: who does not wish for freedom in all degrees of life? though common prudence sometimes makes us act against it, as I am now obliged to do; for I intend to marry my daughter to Don Guzman, whom I expect from Holland every day, whither he went to take possession of a large estate left him by his uncle.

Fred. You will not surely sacrifice the lovely Isabella to age, avarice, and a fool; pardon the expression, my lord, but my concern for your beauteous daughter, transports me beyond that good manners which I ought to pay your lordship's presence.

Lop. I can't deny the justness of the character, Frederick; but you are not insensible what I have suffered by these wars; and he has two things which render him very agreeable to me for a son-in-law—he is rich, and well-born: as for his being a fool, I don't conceive how that can be any blot in a husband, who is already possessed of a good estate.—A poor fool is, indeed, a very scandalous thing, and so are your poor wits, in my opinion, who have nothing to be vain of but the inside of their skulls. Now for Don Guzman—I know I can rule him as I think fit. This is acting the politic part, Frederick, without which, it is impossible to keep up the port of this life.

Fred. But have you no consideration for your daughter's welfare, my lord?

Lop. Is a husband of twenty thousand crowns a-year no consideration? Now I think it a very good consideration.

Fred. One way, my lord.—But what will the world say of such a match?

Lop. Sir, I value not the world a button.

Fred. I cannot think your daughter can have any inclination for such a husband.

Lop. There, I believe, you are pretty much in the right, though it is a secret which I never had the curiosity to inquire into, nor I believe ever shall.—Inclination, quotha! Parents would have a fine time on't if they consulted their children's inclinations!—No, no, sir, it is not a father's business to follow his children's inclinations till he makes himself a beggar.

Fred. But this is of another nature, my lord.

Lop. Lookye, sir; I resolve she shall marry Don Guzman the moment he arrives. Though I could not govern my son, I will my daughter, I assure you.

Fred. This match, my lord, is more preposterous than that which you proposed to your son, from whence arose this fatal quarrel.—Don Antonio's sister, Elvira, wanted beauty only, but Guzman every thing but—

Lop. Money—and that will purchase every thing; and so adieu. [*Exit.*

Fred. Monstrous! these are the resolutions which destroy the comforts of matrimony.—Lissardo! from whence came you?

Enter LISSARDO, *in a Riding Habit.*

Liss. That letter will inform you, sir.

Fred. I hope your master's safe?

Liss. I left him so; I have another to deliver,

which requires haste.—Your most humble servant, sir. [*Bowing.*

Fred. To Violante, I suppose.

Liss. The same. [*Exit.*

Fred. [Reads.] *Dear Frederick,—The two chief blessings of this life, are a friend and a mistress; to be debarred the sight of those, is not to live. I hear nothing of Antonio's death, and therefore resolve to venture to thy house this evening, impatient to see Violante, and embrace my friend. Yours,*

FELIX.

'Pray Heaven he comes undiscovered!—Ha! Colonel Briton!

Enter COLONEL BRITON, *in a riding Habit.*

Col. B. Frederick, I rejoice to see thee.

Fred. What brought you to Lisbon, Colonel?

Col. B. La fortune de la guerre, as the French say. I have commanded these three last years in Spain; but my country has thought fit to strike up a peace, and give us good protestants leave to hope for christian burial; so I resolved to take Lisbon in my way home.

Fred. If you are not provided of a lodging, Colonel, pray command my house while you stay.

Col. B. If I were sure I should not be troublesome, I would accept your offer, Frederick.

Fred. So far from trouble, Colonel, I shall take it as a particular favour. What have we here?

Col. B. My footman: this is our country dress, you must know: which, for the honour of Scotland, I make all my servants wear.

Enter GIBBY, *in a Highland Dress.*

Gibby. What mun I de with the horses, and like yer honour? They will tack cald gin they stand in the causeway.

Fred. Oh, I'll take care of them. What, hoa! Vasquez!

Enter VASQUEZ.

Put those horses, which that honest fellow will show you, into my stable, do you hear? and feed them well.

Vas. Yes, sir.——Sir, by my master's orders, I am, sir, your most obsequious humble servant. Be pleased to lead the way.

Gibby. 'Sbleed! gang your gate, sir, and I sall follow ye. Ise tee hungry to feed on compliments.

[*Exeunt* GIBBY *and* VASQUEZ.

Fred. Ha! ha! a comical fellow!—Well, how do you like our country, Colonel?

Col. B. Why, 'faith, Frederick, a man might pass his time agreeably enough within side of a nunnery; but to behold such troops of soft, plump, tender, melting, wishing, nay, willing girls too, through a damned grate, gives us Britons strong temptations to plunder. Harkye, hast thou never a pretty acquaintance now that thou wouldst consign over to a friend for half an hour, ha?

Fred. 'Faith, Colonel, I am the worst pimp in Christendom; you had better trust to your own luck: the women will soon find you out, I warrant you.

Col. B. Ay, but it is dangerous foraging in an enemy's country; and since I have some hopes of seeing my own again, I had rather purchase my pleasure, than run the hazard of a stiletto in my guts. Wilt thou recommend me to a wife then! ha, friend?

Fred. She must be very handsome, I suppose?

Col. B. The handsomer the better.

Fred. And rich, I suppose?

Col. B. Oh, very rich;—I shall never be able to swallow the matrimonial pill, if it be not well gilded.

Fred. Puh! beauty will make it slide down nimbly.

Col. B. At first, perhaps, it may; but the second or third dose will choke me.—I confess, Frederick, women are the prettiest playthings in nature; but gold, substantial gold! gives them the air, the mien, the shape, the grace, and beauty of a goddess.

Fred. And has not gold the same divinity in their eyes, Colonel?

Col. B. Too often—

None marry now for love,—no, that's a jest:
The self-same bargain serves for wife and beast.

Fred. You are always gay, Colonel. Come, shall we take a refreshing glass at my house, and consider what has been said?

Col. B. I have two or three compliments to discharge for some friends, and then I shall wait on you with pleasure. Where do you live?

Fred. At yon' corner house, with the green rails.

Col. B. In the close of the evening I will endeavour to kiss your hand. Adieu. [*Exit.*

Fred. I shall expect you with impatience. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Room in DON LOPEZ'S *House.*

Enter ISABELLA *and* INIS.

Inis. For goodness' sake, madam, where are you going in this pet?

Isab. Any where to avoid matrimony. The thoughts of a husband are as terrible to me as the sight of a hobgoblin.

Inis. Ay, of an old husband: but if you may chuse for yourself, I fancy matrimony would be no such frightful thing to you.

Isab. You are pretty much in the right, Inis: but to be forced into the arms of an idiot, who has neither person to please the eye, sense to charm the ear, nor generosity to supply these defects! Ah, Inis! what pleasant lives women lead in England, where duty wears no fetter but inclination! The custom of our country enslaves us from our very cradles, first to our parents, next to our husbands, and when Heaven is so kind as to rid us of both these, our brothers still usurp authority, and expect a blind obedience from us; so that maids, wives, or widows, we are little better than slaves to the tyrant, man.—Therefore, to avoid their power, I resolve to cast myself into a monastery.

Inis. That is, you'll cut your own throat to avoid another's doing it for you. Ah, madam, those eyes tell me you have no nun's flesh about you. A monastery, quotha!—Odslife, madam, you are the first woman that ever despaired in a christian country.—Were I in your place——

Isab. Why, what would your wisdom do if you were?

Inis. I'd embark with the first fair wind with all my jewels, and seek my fortune on t'other side the water: no shore can treat you worse than your own. There's ne'er a father in Christendom should make me marry any man against my will.

Isab. I am too great a coward to follow your advice. I must contrive some way to avoid Don Guzman, and yet stay in my own country.

Enter Don Lopez.

Lop. Must you so, mistress? but I shall take care to prevent you. [*Aside.*] Isabella, whither are you going, my child?

Isab. To church, sir.

Inis. The old rogue has certainly overheard her! [*Aside.*

Lop. Your devotion must needs be very strong, or your memory very weak, my dear. Why, vespers are over for this night. Come, come, you shall have a better errand to church than to say your prayers there. Don Guzman is arrived in the river, and I expect him a-shore to-morrow.

Isab. Ha! to-morrow!

Lop. He writes me word that his estate in Holland is worth twelve thousand crowns a-year; which, together with what he had before, will make thee the happiest wife in Lisbon.

Isab. And the most unhappy woman in the world. —Oh, sir, if I have any power in your heart—if the tenderness of a father be not quite extinct, hear me with patience.

Lop. No objection against the marriage, and I will hear whatsoever thou hast to say.

Isab. That's torturing me on the rack, and forbidding me to groan. Upon my knees I claim the privilege of flesh and blood. [*Kneels.*

Lop. I grant it; thou shalt have an armful of flesh and blood to-morrow.—Flesh and blood, quotha!—Heaven forbid I should deny thee flesh and blood, my girl!

Inis. Here's an old dog for you! [*Aside.*

Isab. Do not mistake, sir. The fatal stroke which separates soul and body, is not more terrible to the thoughts of sinners, than the name of Guzman to my ear.

Lop. Puh, puh! you lie, you lie!

Isab. My frighted heart beats hard against my breast, as if it sought a passage to your feet, to beg you'd change your purpose.

Lop. A very pretty speech, this; if it were turned into blank verse, it would serve for a tragedy. Why, thou hast more wit than I thought thou hadst, child. I fancy this was all *extempore;* I don't believe thou didst ever think one word on't before.

Inis. Yes, but she has, my lord; for I have heard her say the same things a thousand times.

Lop. How, how—What do you top your second-hand jests upon your father, hussy, who knows better what's good for you than you do yourself?—Remember, 'tis your duty to obey.

Isab. [*Rising.*] I never disobeyed before, and I wish I had not reason now; but nature hath got the better of my duty, and makes me loath the harsh commands you lay.

Lop. Ha! ha!—Very fine! ha! ha!

Isab. Death itself would be more welcome.

Lop. Are you sure of that?

Isab. I am your daughter, my lord, and can boast as strong a resolution as yourself. I'll die before I'll marry Guzman.

Lop. Say you so? I'll try that presently. [*Draws.*] Here, let me see with what dexterity you can breathe a vein now. [*Offers her his Sword.*] The point is pretty sharp—'twill do your business, I warrant you.

Inis. Bless me, sir! What, do you mean to put a sword into the hands of a desperate woman?

Lop. Desperate! ha! ha! ha! you see how desperate she is. What, art thou frighted, little Bell?—Ha!

Isab. I confess I am startled at your morals, sir.

Lop. Ay, ay, child, thou hadst better take the man he'll hurt thee the least of the two.

Isab. I shall take neither, sir: Death has many

doors; and when I can live no longer with pleasure, I shall find one to let him in at without your aid.

Lop. Say'st thou so, my dear Bell? Ods, I'm afraid thou art a little lunatic, Bell. I must take care of thee, child. [*Takes hold of her.*] I shall make bold to secure thee, my dear; I'll see if locks and bars can keep thee till Guzman come. Go, get into your chamber: [*Locks her in.*

There I'll your boasted resolution try,
And see who'll get the better, you or I.
[*Drives off* INIS, *and exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Room in DON PEDRO'S *House.*

Enter DONNA VIOLANTE, *reading a Letter, and* FLORA *following.*

Flora. What, must that letter be read again?

Vio. Yes, and again, and again, and again, a thousand times again; a letter from a faithful lover can never be read too often; it speaks such kind, such soft, such tender things—— [*Kisses it.*

Flora. But always the same language.

Vio. It does not charm the less for that.

Flora. In my opinion, nothing charms that does not change: and any composition of the four-and-twenty letters, after the first essay, from the same hand, must be dull, except a bank note, or a bill of exchange.

Vio. Thy taste is my aversion.— [*Reads.*

My all that's charming, since life's not life, exiled from thee, this night shall bring me to thy arms. Frederick and thee are all I trust. These six week's absence has been in love's account six hundred years.— When it is dark, expect the wonted signal at thy window: till when, adieu. Thine, more than his own,

FELIX.

Flora. Who would not have said as much to a lady of her beauty, and twenty thousand pounds?— Were I a man, methinks I could have said a hundred finer things.

Vio. What would you have said?

Flora. I would have compared your eyes to the stars, your teeth to ivory, your lips to coral, your neck to alabaster, your shape to——

Vio. No more of your bombast; truth is the best eloquence in a lover.—What proof remains ungiven of his love? When his father threatened to disinherit him for refusing Don Antonio's sister, from whence sprung this unhappy quarrel, did it shake his love for me? and now, though strict inquiry runs through every place, with large rewards to apprehend him, does he not venture all for me?

Flora. But you know, madam, your father, Don Pedro, designs you for a nun—to be sure, you look very like a nun!—and says, your grandfather left you your fortune upon that condition.

Vio. Not without my approbation, girl, when I come to one-and-twenty, as I am informed. But,

however, I shall run the risk of that. Go, call in Lissardo.

Flora. Yes, madam. Now for a thousand verbal questions. [*Exit.*

Enter FLORA, *with* LISSARDO.

Vio. Well, and how do you do, Lissardo?

Liss. Ah, very weary, madam.—'Faith, thou look'st wondrous pretty, Flora! [*Aside to* FLORA.

Vio. How came you?

Liss. En chevalier, madam, upon a hackney jade, which they told me formerly belonged to an English colonel; but I should have rather thought she had been bred a good Roman Catholic all her life time—for she down'd on her knees to every stock and stone we came along by.——My chops water for a kiss, they do, Flora. [*Aside to* FLORA.

Flora. You'd make one believe you are wondrous fond now.

Vio. Where did you leave your master?

Liss. Od, if I had you alone, housewife, I'd show you how fond I could be.— [*Aside to* FLORA.

Vio. Where did you leave your master?

Liss. At a little farmhouse, madam, about five miles off. He'll be at Don Frederick's in the evening.—Od, I will so revenge myself of those lips of thine. [*To* FLORA.

Vio. Is he in health?

Flora. Oh, you counterfeit wondrous well. [*To* LISSARDO.

Liss. No; every body knows I counterfeit very ill. [*To* FLORA.

Vio. How say you? Is Felix ill? What's his distemper? ha?

Liss. A pize on't, I hate to be interrupted,—Love, madam, love—In short, madam, I believe he has thought of nothing but your ladyship ever since he

left Lisbon. I am sure he could not, if I may judge of his heart by my own.

[*Looking lovingly upon* FLORA.

Vio. How came you so well acquainted with your master's thoughts, Lissardo?

Liss. By an infallible rule, madam; words are the pictures of the mind, you know: now, to prove he thinks of nothing but you, he talks of nothing but you.—For example, madam, coming from shooting t'other day; with a brace of partridges, Lissardo, said he, go bid the cook roast me these Violantes.—I flew into the kitchen, full of thoughts of thee, cried, Here, Cook, roast me these Floras. [*To* FLORA.

Flora. Ha! ha! excellent!—You mimic your master, then, it seems.

Liss. I can do every thing as well as my master, you little rogue.—Another time, madam, the priest came to make him a visit, he called out hastily, Lissardo, said he, bring a Violante for my father to sit down on.—Then he often mistook my name, madam, and called me Violante: in short, I heard it so often, that it became as familiar to me as my prayers.

Vio. You live very merrily then, it seems.

Liss. Oh, exceeding merry, madam!

[*Kisses* FLORA'S *Hand.*

Vio. Ha! exceeding merry! had you treats and balls?

Liss. Oh! yes, yes, madam, several.

Flora. You are mad, Lissardo; you don't mind what my lady says to you. [*Aside to* LISSARDO.

Vio. Ha! balls!—Is he so merry in my absence? And did your master dance, Lissardo?

Liss. Dance, madam! where, madam?

Vio. Why, at those balls you speak of.

Liss. Balls! what balls, madam?

Vio. Why, sure you are in love, Lissardo? did not you say, but now, you had balls where you have been?

Liss. Balls, madam! Odslife, I ask your pardon, madam! I, I, I, had mislaid some wash-balls of my master's t'other day; and because I could not think where I had laid them, just when he asked for them, he very fairly broke my head, madam; and now, it seems, I can think of nothing else. Alas! he dance, madam! No, no, poor gentleman! he is as melancholy as an enbraced drum.

Vio. Poor Felix! There, wear that ring for your master's sake, and let him know I shall be ready to receive him. [*Exit.*

Liss. I shall, madam.——[*Puts on the Ring.*] Methinks a diamond ring is a vast addition to the little finger of a gentleman. [*Admiring his Hand.*

Flora. That ring must be mine.——Well, Lissardo, what haste you make to pay off arrears now! Look how the fellow stands!

Liss. Egad, methinks I have a very pretty hand—and very white—and the shape!——'Faith, I never minded it so much before—In my opinion, it is a very fine shaped hand—and becomes a diamond ring as well as the first grandee's in Portugal.

Flora. The man's transported! Is this your love, this your impatience?

Liss. [*Takes Snuff.*] Now, in my mind—I take snuff with a very jantee air——Well, I am persuaded I want nothing but a coach and a title to make me a very fine gentleman. [*Struts about.*

Flora. Sweet Mr. Lissardo! [*Courtesying.*] if I may presume to speak to you without affronting your little finger——

Liss. Odso, madam, I ask your pardon——Is it to me, or to the ring——you direct your discourse, madam?

Flora. Madam! Good lack! how much a diamond ring improves one!

Liss. Why, though I say it, I can carry myself as well as any body—But what wert thou going to say, child?

Flora. Why, I was going to say that I fancy you had best let me keep that ring: it will be a very pretty wedding ring, Lissardo, would it not?

Liss. Humph! ah! But—but—but—I believe I shan't marry yet a while.

Flora. You shan't, you say!—Very well! I suppose you design that ring for Inis.

Liss. No, no; I never bribe an old acquaintance—Perhaps I might let it sparkle in the eyes of a stranger a little, till we come to a right understanding—but then, like all other mortal things, it would return from whence it came.

Flora. Insolent!——Is that your manner of dealing?

Liss. With all but thee—Kiss me, you little rogue, you. [*Hugging her.*

Flora. Little rogue! Pr'ythee, fellow, don't be so familiar; [*Pushing him away.*] if I may'nt keep your ring, I can keep my kisses.

Liss. You can, you say! Spóke with the air of a chambermaid.

Flora. Replied with the spirit of a serving man.

Liss. Pr'ythee, Flora, don't let you and I fall out; I am in a merry humour, and shall certainly fall in somewhere.

Flora. What care I where you fall in?

Enter DONNA VIOLANTE.

Vio. Why do you keep Lissardo so long, Flora, when you don't know how soon my father may awake? his afternoon naps are never long.

Flora. Had Don Felix been with her, she would not have thought the time long. These ladies consider nobody's wants but their own. [*Aside.*

Vio. Go, go, let him out.

Flora. Yes, madam.

Liss. I fly, madam. [*Exeunt* LISSARDO *and* FLORA.

Vio. The day draws in, and night, the lover's friend, advances—night, more welcome than the sun to me, because it brings my love.

Flora. [*Shrieks within.*] Ah, thieves! thieves! Murder! murder!

Vio. [*Shrieks.*] Ah! defend me, Heaven! What do I hear? Felix is certainly pursued, and will be taken.

Enter FLORA, *running.*

How now? why dost stare so? Answer me quickly? what's the matter?

Flora. Oh, madam! as I was letting out Lissardo, a gentleman rushed between him and I, struck down my candle, and is bringing a dead person in his arms into our house.

Vio. Ha! a dead person! Heaven grant it does not prove my Felix!

Flora. Here they are, madam.

Vio. I'll retire till you discover the meaning of this accident. [*Exit.*

Enter COLONEL BRITON, *with* DONNA ISABELLA *in his Arms; sets her down in a Chair, and addresses himself to* FLORA.

Col. B. Madam, the necessity this lady was under of being conveyed into some house with speed and secrecy, will, I hope, excuse any indecency I might be guilty of in pressing so rudely into this—I am an entire stranger to her name and circumstances—'would I were so to her beauty too! [*Aside.*]—I commit her, madam, to your care, and fly to make her retreat secure, if the street be clear: permit me to return, and learn from her own mouth if I can be further serviceable. Pray, madam, how is the lady of this house called?

Flora. Violante, signior.

Col. B. Are you she, madam?

Flora. Only her woman, signior.

Col. B. Your humble servant, mistress. Pray, be careful of the lady.——

[*Gives her two Moidores, and exit.*

Flora. Two moidores! Well, he is a generous fellow! This is the only way to make one careful.

Enter DONNA VIOLANTE.

Vio. Was you distracted, Flora, to tell my name to a man you never saw! Unthinking wench! who knows what this may turn to?——What, is the lady dead? Ah! defend me, Heaven! 'tis Isabella, sister to my Felix! What has befallen her? 'Pray Heaven he's safe!—Run and fetch some cold water.—Stay, stay, Flora.—Isabella, friend, speak to me; Oh! speak to me, or I shall die with apprehension.

Isab. Oh, hold, my dearest father! do not force me; indeed I cannot love him.

Vio. How wild she talks!——

Isab. Ha! where am I?

Vio. With one as sensible of thy pain as thou thyself canst be.

Isab. Violante! what kind star preserved and lodged me here?

Flora. It was a terrestrial star, called a man, madam; 'pray Jupiter he proves a lucky one!

Isab. Oh, I remember now. Forgive me, dear Violante! my thoughts ran so much upon the danger I escaped, I forgot.

Vio. May I not know your story?

Isab. Thou art no stranger to one part of it. I have often told thee that my father designed to sacrifice me to Don Guzman, who, it seems, is just returned from Holland, and expected ashore to-morrow, the day that he has set to celebrate our nuptials. Upon my refusing to obey him, he locked me into my chamber, vowing to keep me there till he ar-

rived, and force me to consent. I know my father to be positive, never to be won from his design; and having no hope left me to escape the marriage, I leaped from the window into the street.

Vio. You have not hurt yourself, I hope?

Isab. No; a gentleman passing by, by accident, caught me in his arms: at first, my fright made me apprehend it was my father, till he assured me to the contrary.

Flora. He is a very fine gentleman, I promise you, madam, and a well bred man, I warrant him. I think I never saw a grandee put his hand into his pocket with a better air in my whole lifetime; then he opened his purse with such a grace, that nothing but his manner of presenting me with the gold could equal.

Vio. Go, leave us, Flora.——But how came you hither, Isabella?

Isab. I know not; I desired the stranger to convey me to the next monastery, but ere I reach'd the door, I saw, or fancied that I saw, Lissardo, my brother's man, and the thought, that his master might not be far off, flung me into a swoon, which is all that I can remember.——Ha! what's here? [*Takes up a Letter.*] *For Colonel Briton, to be left at the post-house in Lisbon.* This must be dropped by the stranger which brought me hither.

Vio. Thou art fallen into the hands of a soldier; take care he does not lay thee under contribution, girl.

Isab. I find he is a gentleman, and if he is but unmarried, I could be content to follow him all the world over.—But I shall never see him more, I fear.

[*Sighs, and pauses.*

Vio. What makes you sigh, Isabella?

Isab. The fear of falling into my father's clutches again.

Vio. Can I be serviceable to you?

Isab. Yes, if you conceal me two or three days.

Vio. You may command my house, and secrecy.

Isab. I thank you, Violante. I wish you would oblige me with Mrs. Flora a while.

Vio. I'll send her to you.—I must watch if dad be still asleep, or here will be no room for Felix. [*Exit.*

Isab. Well, I don't know what ails me; methinks I wish I could find this stranger out.

Enter FLORA.

Flora. Does your ladyship want me, madam?

Isab. Ay, Mrs. Flora: I resolve to make you my confidant.

Flora. I shall endeavour to discharge my duty, madam.

Isab. I doubt it not, and desire you to accept this, as a token of my gratitude.

Flora. Oh, dear signora! I should have been your humble servant without a fee.

Isab. I believe it—But to the purpose——Do you think, if you saw the gentleman which brought me hither, you should know him again?

Flora. From a thousand, madam; I have an excellent memory where an handsome man is concerned. When he went away, he said he would return again immediately. I admire he comes not.

Isab. Here, did you say? You rejoice me——— though I'll not see him if he comes. Could not you contrive to give him a letter?

Flora. With the air of a duenna——

Isab. Not in this house—you must veil and follow him—He must not know it comes from me.

Flora. What, do you take me for a novice in love affairs? Though I have not practised the art since I have been in Donna Violante's service, yet I have not lost the theory of a chambermaid—Do you write the letter, and leave the rest to me.—Here, here, here's pen, ink, and paper.

Isab. I'll do it in a minute. [*Sits down to write.*

Flora. So! this is a business after my own heart.—Love always takes care to reward his labourers, and Great Britain seems to be his favourite country.—Oh! I long to see the other two moidores with a British air—Methinks there's a grace peculiar to that nation in making a present.

Isab. So. I have done. Now, if he does but find this house again!

Flora. If he should not—I warrant I'll find him, if he's in Lisbon; for I have a strong possession that he has two moidores, as good as ever was told.

[*Puts the Letter into her Bosom.*

Enter DONNA VIOLANTE.

Vio. Flora, watch my father; he's fast asleep in his study: if you find him stir, give me notice. [COLONEL BRITON *taps at the Window.*] Hark! I hear Felix at the window! admit him instantly, and then to your post. [*Exit* FLORA.

Isab. What say you, Violante? is my brother come?

Vio. It is his signal at the window.

Isab. [*Kneels.*] Oh, Violante! I conjure you, by all the love thou bear'st to Felix, by thy own generous nature; nay, more, by that unspotted virtue thou art mistress of, do not discover to my brother I am here.

Vio. Contrary to your desire, be assured, I never shall. But where's the danger?

Isab. Art thou born in Lisbon, and ask that question? He'll think his honour blemished by my disobedience, and would restore me to my father, or kill me; therefore, dear, dear girl——

Vio. Depend upon my friendship; nothing shall draw the secret from these lips, not even Felix, though at the hazard of his love. I hear him coming; retire into that closet.

Isab. Remember, Violante, upon thy promise my very life depends. [*Exit.*

Vio. When I betray thee, may I share thy fate.

Enter DON FELIX.

My Felix, my everlasting love! [*Runs into his Arms.*

Fel. My life! my soul! my Violante!

Vio. What hazards dost thou run for me!—Oh! how shall I requite thee?

Fel. If during this tedious painful exile thy thoughts have never wandered from thy Felix, thou hast made me more than satisfaction.

Vio. Can there be room within this heart for any but thyself? No; if the god of love were lost to all the rest of human kind, thy image would secure him in my breast: I am all truth, all love, all faith, and know no jealous fears.

Fel. My heart's the proper sphere where love resides: could he quit that, he would be nowhere found; and yet, Violante, I'm in doubt.

Vio. Did I ever give thee cause to doubt, my Felix?

Fel. True love has many fears, and fear as many eyes as fame; yet sure I think they see no fault in thee. [COLONEL *taps again.*] What's that?

[*Taps again.*

Vio. What! I heard nothing. [*Again.*

Fel. Ha! What means this signal at your window?

Vio. Somewhat, perhaps, in passing by, might accidentally hit it; it can be nothing else.

Col. B. [*Within.*] Hist, hist, Donna Violante! Donna Violante!

Fel. They use your name by accident too, do they, madam?

Enter FLORA.

Flora. There is a gentleman at the window, ma-

dam, which I fancy to be him who brought Isabella hither. Shall I admit him? [*Aside to* VIOLANTE.

Vio. Admit distraction rather! Thou art the cause of this, unthinking wretch. [*Aside to* FLORA.

Fel. What, has Mrs. Scout brought you fresh intelligence?

Flora. Scout! I scorn your words, seignor.

Vio. Nay, nay, nay, you must not leave me.

[*Catches hold of him.*

Fel. Oh! 'tis but fair to answer the gentleman, madam! it is none of his fault that his visit proves unseasonable! Pray let me go; my presence is but a restraint upon you. [*Struggles to get from her.*

Vio. Was ever accident so mischievous! [*Aside.*

Flora. It must be the colonel.—Now to deliver my letter to him. [*Exit.—The* COLONEL *taps louder.*

Fel. Hark! he grows impatient at your delay.—Why do you hold the man, whose absence would oblige you? Pray, let me go, madam. Consider, the gentleman wants you at the window.

[*Struggles still.*

Vio. It is not me he wants.

Fel. Death! not you! Is there another of your name in the house? But come on, convince me of the truth of what you say; open the window; if his business does not lie with you, your conversation may be heard. This, and only this, can take off my suspicion.—What, do you pause? Oh! guilt, guilt! Have I caught you? Nay, then, I'll leap the balcony. If I remember, this way leads to it.

[*Breaks from her, and goes to the Door where* ISABELLA *is.*

Vio. Hold! hold! hold! hold! not for the world you enter there. Which way shall I preserve his sister from his knowledge? [*Aside.*

Fel. What, have I touched you? Do you fear your lover's life?

Vio. I fear for none but you.—For goodness sake, do not speak so loud, my Felix. If my father hears you, I am lost for ever; that door opens into his apartment. What shall I do if he enters? There he finds his sister.—If he goes out, he'll quarrel with the stranger.—Felix! Felix! Your curiosity shall be satisfied. [*Goes to the Window, and throws up the Sash.*] Whoe'er you are, that with such insolence dare use my name, and give the neighbourhood pretence to reflect upon my conduct, I charge you instantly to begone, or expect the treatment you deserve.

Col. B. I ask pardon, madam, and will obey: but when I left this house to-night——

Fel. Good!

Vio. It is most certainly the stranger. [*Aside.*]—You are mistaken in the house, I suppose, sir.

Fel. No, no; he's not mistaken.—Pray, madam, let the gentleman go on.

Vio. Pray, be gone, sir; I know of no business you have here.

Col. B. I wish I did not know it neither.—But this house contains my soul; then can you blame my body for hovering about it?

Fel. Excellent!

Vio. I tell you again you are mistaken; however, for your own satisfaction, call to-morrow.

Fel. Matchless impudence! An assignation before my face!—No, he shall not live to meet your wishes.

[*Takes out a Pistol, and goes towards the Window; she catches hold of him.*

Vio. Ah! [*Shrieks.*] Hold, I conjure you.

Col. B. To-morrow's an age, madam! may I not be admitted to-night?

Vio. If you be a gentleman, I command your absence.—Unfortunate! what will my stars do with me? [*Aside.*

Col. B. I have done—only this——be careful of my life, for it is in your keeping.

[*Exit from the Window.*

Fel. Pray observe the gentleman's request, madam.

[*Walking off from her.*

Vio. I am all confusion. [*Aside.*

Fel. You are all truth, all love, all faith! oh, thou all woman!—How have I been deceived!—'Sdeath! could you not have imposed upon me for this one night? Could neither my faithful love, nor all the hazard I have run to see you, make me worthy to be cheated on?—Oh, thou——

Vol. Can I bear this from you? [*Weeps.*

Fel. [*Repeats.*] When I left this house to-night—To-night! the devil! return so soon!

Vio. Oh, Isabella! what hast thou involved me in! [*Aside.*

Fel. [*Repeats.*] This house contains my soul!—Sweet soul!

Vio. Yet I resolve to keep the secret. [*Aside.*

Fel. [*Repeats.*] Be careful of my life, for it is in your keeping.——Damnation!—How ugly she appears! [*Looking at her.*

Vio. Do not look so sternly on me; but believe me, Felix, I have not injured you, nor am I false.

Fel. Not false! not injured me! Oh, Violante, lost and abandoned to thy vice! Not false! Oh, monstrous!

Vio. Indeed I am not.—There is a cause which I must not reveal.—Oh, think how far honour can oblige your sex—then allow a woman may be bound by the same rule to keep a secret.

Fel. Honour! what hast thou to do with honour? Thou that canst admit plurality of lovers?—A secret! ha! ha! ha!—His affairs are wondrous safe who trusts his secret to a woman's keeping. But you need give yourself no trouble about clearing

this point, madam, for you are become so indifferent to me, that your truth and falsehood are the same.

Enter FLORA.

Flora. So, I have delivered my letter to the colonel. [*Aside.*] Madam, your father bade me see what noise that was.—For goodness sake, sir, why do you speak so loud?

Fel. I understand my cue, mistress; my absence is necessary; I'll oblige you.

[*Going, she takes hold of him.*

Vio. Oh, let me undeceive you first!

Fel. Impossible!

Vio. 'Tis very possible, if I durst.

Fel. Durst! ha! ha! ha!—Durst, quotha!

Vio. But another time I'll tell thee all.

Fel. Nay, now or never——

Vio. Now it cannot be.

Fel. Then it shall never be.——Thou most ungrateful of thy sex, farewell!

[*Breaks from her, and exit.*

Vio. Oh, exquisite trial of my friendship! Yet, not even this shall draw the secret from me.

That I'll preserve, let fortune frown or smile;
And trust to Love, my love to reconcile. [*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A Chamber in DON LOPEZ'S *House.*

Enter DON LOPEZ.

Lop. Was ever man thus plagued? Odsheart, I could swallow my dagger for madness. I know not what to think: sure Frederick had no hand in her escape.—She must get out of the window, and she could not do that without a ladder; and who could bring it to her but him? Ay, it must be so! This graceless baggage!—But I'll to Frederick immediately; I'll take the alguazil with me, and search his house; and if I find her I'll use her—by St. Anthony I don't know how I'll use her! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Street.

Enter COLONEL BRITON, *with* ISABELLA'S *Letter in his Hand, and* GIBBY *following.*

Col. B. Well, though I could not see my fair incognita, Fortune, to make me amends, has flung another

intrigue in my way. Oh, how I love these pretty, kind, coming females, that won't give a man the trouble of racking his invention to deceive them!—This letter I received from a lady in a veil—some duenna, some necessary implement of Cupid. I suppose the style is frank and easy, I hope like her that writ it. [*Reads.*] *Sir, I have seen your person, and like it,*—very concise,—*and if you'll meet at four o'clock in the morning, upon the Terriero de Passa, half an hour's conversation will let me into your mind.*—Ha! ha! ha! a philosophical wench! This is the first time I ever knew a woman had any business with the mind of a man.—*If your intellects answer your outward appearance, the adventure may not displease you. I expect you'll not attempt to see my face, nor offer any thing unbecoming the gentleman I take you for.*—Humph, the gentleman she takes me for! I hope she takes me to be flesh and blood, and then I am sure I shall do nothing unbecoming a gentleman. Well, if I must not see her face, it shall go hard if I don't know where she lives.—Gibby!

Gibby. Here, an lik yer honour.

Col. B. Follow me at a good distance, do you hear, Gibby?

Gibby. In troth dee I, weel enough, sir.

Col. B. I am to meet a lady upon the *Terriero de passa.*

Gibby. The deel an mine eyn gin I ken her, sir.

Col. B. But you will when you come there, sirrah.

Gibby. Like enough, sir; I have as sharp an eyn tull a bonny lass as ere a lad in aw Scotland. And what mun I dee wi' her, sir?

Col. B. Why, if she and I part, you must watch her home, and bring me word where she lives.

Gibby. In troth sal I, sir, gin the deel tak her not.

Col. B. Come along then, it is pretty near the time.

I like a woman that rises early to pursue her inclination.

Thus we improve the pleasure of the day,
While tasteless mortals sleep their time away.
[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

FREDERICK'S *House.*

Enter INIS *and* LISSARDO.

Liss. Your lady run away, and you know not whither, say you?

Inis. She never greatly cared for me, after finding you and I together. But you are very grave methinks, Lissardo.

Liss. [*Looking on the Ring.*] Not at all—I have some thoughts, indeed of altering my course of living: there is a critical minute in every man's life, which, if he can but lay hold of, he may make his fortune.

Inis. Ha! what do I see? A diamond ring!—Where the deuce had he that ring? You have got a very pretty ring there, Lissardo.

Liss. Ay, the trifle is pretty enough—but the lady who gave it to me is a bona roba in beauty, I assure you. [*Cocks his Hat, and struts.*

Inis. I can't bear this.——The lady! what lady, pray?

Liss. O fie! there's a question to ask a gentleman!

Inis. A gentleman! why the fellow's spoiled! Is

this your love for me? Ungrateful man! you'll break my heart, so you will! [*Bursts into Tears.*

Liss. Poor tender-hearted fool!—

Inis. If I knew who gave you that ring, I'd tear her eyes out, so I would! [*Sobs.*

Liss. So, now the jade wants a little coaxing.—Why, what dost weep for now, my dear? ha!

Inis. I suppose Flora gave you that ring; but I'll—

Liss. No, the devil take me if she did: you make me swear now.—So, they are all for the ring, but I shall bob them.—I did but joke; the ring is none of mine, it is my master's; I am to give it to be new set, that's all; therefore, pr'ythee, dry thy eyes, and kiss me; come.

Enter FLORA.

Inis. And do you really speak truth now?

Liss. Why, do you doubt it?

Flora. So, so; very well! I thought there was an intrigue between him and Inis, for all he has forsworn it so often. [*Aside.*

Inis. Nor ha'n't you seen Flora since you came to town?

Flora. Ha! how dares she name my name? [*Aside.*

Liss. No, by this kiss I ha'n't. [*Kisses her.*

Flora. Here's a dissembling varlet! [*Aside.*

Inis. Nor don't you love her at all?

Liss. Love the devil! Why, did I not always tell thee she was my aversion?

Flora. Did you so, villain? [*Strikes him a Box on the Ear.*

Liss. Zounds, she here! I have made a fine spot of work on't! [*Aside.*

Inis. What's that for? ha! [*Brushes up to her.*

Flora. I shall tell you by and by, Mrs. Frippery, if you don't get about your business.

Inis. Who do you call Frippery, Mrs. Trollop!—Pray, get about your business, if you go to that. I hope you pretend to no right and title here?

Liss. What the devil! do they take me for an acre of land, that they quarrel about right and title to me? [*Aside.*

Flora. Pray, what right have you, mistress, to ask that question?

Inis. No matter for that; I can show a better title to him than you, I believe.

Flora. What, has he given thee nine months earnest for a living title? ha! ha!

Inis. Don't fling your flaunting jests to me, Mrs. Boldface, for I won't take them, I assure you.

Liss. So! now I'm as great as the famed Alexander. But, my dear Statira and Roxana, don't exert yourselves so much about me. Now, I fancy if you would agree lovingly together, I might, in a modest way, satisfy both your demands upon me.

Flora. You satisfy! No, sirrah, I am not to be satisfied so soon as you think, perhaps!

Inis. No, nor I neither.—What! do you make no difference between us?

Flora. You pitiful fellow, you!—What, you fancy, I warrant, I gave myself the trouble of dogging you, out of love to your filthy person; but you are mistaken, sirrah!—It was to detect your treachery.—How often have you sworn to me that you hated Inis, and only carried fair for the good cheer she gave you, but that you could never like a woman with crooked legs, you said!

Inis. How, how, sirrah! crooked legs! Odd, I could find in my heart.

[*Snatching up her Petticoat a little.*

Liss. Here's a lying young jade, now! Pr'ythee, my dear, moderate thy passion. [*Coaxingly.*

Inis. I'd have you to know, sirrah, my legs were

never——Your master, I hope, understands legs better than you do, sirrah. [*Passionately.*

Liss. My master!—So, so!

[*Shaking his Head, and winking.*

Flora. I am glad I have done some mischief, however. [*Aside.*

Liss. [*To* INIS.] Art thou really so foolish, to mind what an enraged woman says? Don't you see she does it on purpose to part you and I? [*Runs to* FLORA.] Could not you find the joke without putting yourself in a passion, you silly girl, you? Why, I saw you follow us plain enough, mum, and said all this, that you might not go back with only your labour for your pains.—But you are a revengeful young slut though, I tell you that; but come, kiss and be friends.

Flora. Don't think to coax me; hang your kisses.

Fel. [*Within.*] Lissardo!

Liss. Ods-heart, here's my master! The devil take both these jades for me; what shall I do with them?

Inis. Ha! 'tis Don Felix's voice; I would not have him find me here with his footman for the world! [*Aside.*

Fel. [*Within.*] Why, Lissardo! Lissardo!

Liss. Coming, sir.—What a pox will you do?

Flora. Bless me, which way shall I get out?

Liss. Nay, nay, you must e'en set your quarrel aside, and be content to be mewed up in this clothes-press together, or stay where you are, and face it out:—there is no help for it.

Flora. Put me any where rather than that; come, come, let me in. [*He opens the Press, and she goes in.*

Inis. I'll see her hanged before I'll go into the place where she is:—I'll trust Fortune with my deliverance. Here used to be a pair of back stairs—I'll try to find them out. [*Exit.*

Enter DON FELIX *and* FREDERICK.

Fel. Were you asleep, sirrah, that you did not hear me call?

Liss. I did hear you, and answered you, I was coming, sir.

Fel. Go, get the horses ready; I'll leave Lisbon to-night, never to see it more.

Liss. Hey-day! what's the matter now? [*Exit.*

Fred. Pray tell me, Don Felix, what has ruffled your temper thus?

Fel. A woman—Oh, friend! who can name woman, and forget inconstancy!

Fred. This from a person of mean education were excusable; such low suspicions have their source from vulgar conversation; men of your politer taste never rashly censure.—Come, this is some groundless jealousy.—Love raises many fears.

Fel. No, no: my ears conveyed the truth into my heart, and reason justifies my anger. Oh, my friend! Violante's false! and I have nothing left but *thee* in Lisbon, which can make me wish ever to see it more, except revenge upon my rival, of whom I'm ignorant. Oh, that some miracle would reveal him to me, that I might, through his heart, punish her infidelity!

Enter LISSARDO.

Liss. Oh, sir, here's your father, Don Lopez, coming up!

Fel. Does he know that I am here?

Liss. I can't tell, sir—he ask'd for Don Frederick.

Fred. Did he see you?

Liss. No, sir; for as soon as I heard him, I ran to give my master notice.

Fel. Keep out of his sight then. [*Exit* LISSARDO.] And, dear Frederick, permit me to retire into the next room; for I know the old gentleman will be

very much displeased at my return without his leave. [*Exit.*

Fred. Quick, quick, begone! he is here!

Enter DON LOPEZ, *speaking as he enters.*

Lop. Mr. Alguazil, wait you without till I call for you.—Frederick, an affair brings me here—which—requires privacy—so that if you have any body within ear-shot, pray order them to retire.

Fred. We are private, my lord—speak freely.

Lop. Why then, sir, I must tell you, that you had better have pitched upon any man in Portugal to have injured, than myself.

Fred. I understand you not, my lord.

Lop. Though I am old, I have a son!—Alas, why name I him?—He knows not the dishonour of my house.

Fred. Explain yourself, my lord—I am not conscious of any dishonourable action to any man, much less to your lordship.

Lop. 'Tis false; you have debauched my daughter.

Fred. My lord, I scorn so foul a charge.

Lop. You have debauched her duty at least; therefore instantly restore her to me, or by St. Anthony I'll make you.

Fred. Restore her, my lord! where shall I find her?

Lop. I have those that will swear she is here in your house.

Fred. You are misinformed, my lord! Upon my reputation I have not seen Donna Isabella since the absence of Don Felix.

Lop. Then pray, sir—if I am not too inquisitive, what motive had you for those objections you made against her marriage with Don Guzman yesterday?

Fred. The disagreeableness of such a match, I feared, would give your daughter cause to curse her

duty, if she complied with your demands; that was all, my lord.

Lop. And so you helped her through the window, to make her disobey?

Fred. This is insulting me, my lord, when I assure you, I have neither seen, nor know, any thing of your daughter; if she is gone, the contrivance was her own, and you may thank your rigour for it.

Lop. Very well, sir; however, my rigour shall make bold to search your house. Here, call in the alguazil.

Flora. [*Peeping.*] The alguazil! What in the name of wonder, will become of me?

Fred. The alguazil! My lord, you'll repent this.

Enter ALGUAZIL, *and Two* OFFICERS.

Lop. No, sir, 'tis you that will repent it. I charge you, in the king's name, to assist me in finding my daughter. Be sure you leave no part of the house unsearched.—Come, follow me.

[*Gets towards the Door, where* FELIX *is*—FREDERICK *draws, and plants himself before the Door.*

Fred. Sir, I must first know by what authority you pretend to search my house, before you enter here.

Alg. How, sir! dare you presume to draw your sword upon the representative of majesty? I am, sir, I am his majesty's alguazil, and the very quintessence of authority, therefore, put your sword up, or, I shall order you to be knocked down; for know, sir, the breath of an alguazil is as dangerous as the breath of a demi-culverin.

Lop. She is certainly in that room, by his guarding the door—If he disputes your authority, knock him down, I say.

Fred. The woman you look for, is not here; but

there is something in this room, which I'll preserve from your sight, at the hazard of my life.

Lop. Enter, I say; nothing, but my daughter, can be there.—Force his sword from him.

[FELIX *comes out, and joins* FREDERICK.

Fel. Villains, stand off! assassinate a man in his own house!

Lop. Oh, oh, ho, misericordia! what do I see? my son!

Alg. Ha, his son! Here's five hundred pistoles, good my brethren, if Antonio dies; and that's in the surgeon's power, and he's in love with my daughter, you know, so seize him.

Lop. Hold, hold! Oh that ever I was born!

Fred. Did I not tell you, you would repent, my lord? What, hoa! within there!

Enter SERVANTS.

Arm yourselves, and let not a man in, nor out, but Felix.

Fel. Generous Frederick!

Fred. Lookye, alguazil, when you would betray my friend, for filthy lucre, I shall no more regard you as an officer of justice, but, as a thief and robber, thus resist you.

Fel. Come on, sir, we'll show you play for the five hundred pistoles. [*They fight.*

Lop. Hold, hold, alguazil, I'll give you the five hundred pistoles—that is, my bond, to pay upon Antonio's death, and twenty pistoles, however things go, for you and these honest fellows, to drink my health.

Alg. Say you so, my lord? Why, lookye, my lord, I bear the young gentleman no ill will, my lord. If I get but the five hundred pistoles, my lord—why, lookye, my lord, 'tis the same thing to me, whether your son be hanged, or not, my lord.

Fel. Scoundrels!—

Lop. Ay, well, thou art a goodnatured fellow,

that's the truth on't—Come then, we'll away, and sign and seal, this minute. Oh, Felix! why wouldst thou serve me thus? But I cannot upbraid thee now, nor have I time to talk. Be careful of thyself, or thou wilt break my heart.

[*Exeunt* LOPEZ, ALGUAZIL, *and* ATTENDANTS.

Fel. Now, Frederick, though I ought to thank you for your care of me, yet, till I am satisfied, as to my father's accusation, (for I overheard it all) I cannot return the acknowledgments I owe you. Know you aught relating to my sister?

Fred. I hope my faith and truth are known to you; and here, by both I swear, I am ignorant of every thing relating to your father's charge.

Fel. Enough, I do believe thee. Oh, Fortune! where will thy malice end?

Enter VASQUEZ.

Vasq. Sir, I bring you joyful news.

Fel. What's the matter?

Vasq. I am told, that Don Antonio is out of danger, and now in the palace.

Fel. I wish it be true; then I'm at liberty to watch my rival, and pursue my sister. Pr'ythee, Frederick, inform thyself of the truth of this report.

Fred. I will, this minute. Do you hear? let nobody in to Don Felix, till my return. [*Exit.*

Vasq. I'll observe, sir. [*Exit.*

Flo. [*Peeping.*] They have almost frighted me out of my wits, I'm sure—Now Felix is alone, I have a good mind to pretend I came with a message from my lady; but how, then, shall I say, I came into the cupboard?

Vasquez. [*Within.*] I tell you, madam, Don Felix is not here.

Violante. [*Within.*] I tell you, sir, he is here, and I will see him.

Fel. What noise is that?

Flora. [*From the Closet.*] My stars! my lady here! [*Shuts the Press close.*

Enter VIOLANTE.

Vio. You are as difficult of access, sir, as a first minister of state.

Fel. If your visit was designed for Frederick, madam, he is abroad.

Vio. No, sir, the visit is to you.

Fel. You are very punctual in your ceremonies, madam.

Vio. Though I did not come to return your visit, but to take that, which your civility ought to have brought me.

Fel. If my eyes, my ears, and my understanding lied, then I am in your debt; else not, madam.

Vio. I will not charge them with a term so gross, to say they lied; but call it a mistake—nay, call it any thing to excuse my Felix. Could I, think ye—could I put off my pride so far, poorly to dissemble a passion which I did not feel, or seek a reconciliation, with what I did not love? and no law, whilst single, binds us to obey; but your sex, are, by nature and education, obliged to pay a deference to all womankind.

Fel. These are fruitless arguments. 'Tis most certain, thou wert dearer to these eyes, than all that Heaven e'er gave to charm the sense of man; but I would rather tear them out, than suffer them to delude my reason, and enslave my peace.

Vio. Can you love, without esteem? and, where is the esteem for her you still suspect?—Oh, Felix! there is a delicacy in love, which equals even a religious faith! True love never doubts the object it adores, and sceptics there, will disbelieve their sight.

Fel. Your notions are too refined for mine, madam,

Enter VASQUEZ.

How now, sirrah! what do you want?

Vasq. Only my master's cloak out of this press, sir, that's all.

Fel. Make haste then.

Vasq. [*Opens the Press, sees* FLORA, *and roars out.*] Oh, the devil! the devil! [*Exit.*

Flo. Discovered! nay, then, legs befriend me. [*Runs out.*

Vio. Ah! a woman concealed! very well, Felix.

Fel. A woman in the press!

Enter LISSARDO.

Liss. Sir, the horses are——

Fel. How the devil came a woman there, sirrah?

Liss. What shall I say now?

Vio. Now, Lissardo, show your wit, to bring your master off.

Liss. Off, madam? Nay, nay, nay, there—there needs no great wit to—to—to bring him off, madam; for she did come—

Fel. She did come!

Liss. That is, she did not come, as—as—as—a—a—a man may say directly to—to—to—to speak with my master, madam.

Vio. I see, by your stammering, Lissardo, that your invention is at a very low ebb.

Fel. 'Sdeath rascal! speak without hesitation, and the truth too, or I shall stick my spado in your guts.

Vio. No, no, your master mistakes; he would not have you speak the truth.

Fel. Madam, my sincerity wants no excuse.

Liss. I am so confounded between one and the other, that I cannot think of a lie. [*Aside.*

Fel. Sirrah, fetch me this woman back, instantly—I'll know what business she has here.

Vio. Not a step; your master shall not be put to

the blush. Come, a truce, Felix; do you ask me no more questions about the window, and I'll forgive this.

Fel. Madam, I scorn forgiveness, where I own no crime; but your soul, conscious of its guilt, would fain lay hold of this occasion, to blend your treason with my innocence.

Vio. Insolent! Nay, if, instead of owning your fault, you endeavour to insult my patience, I must tell you, sir, you don't behave yourself like that man of honour you would be taken for—you ground your quarrel with me upon your own inconstancy; 'tis plain you are false yourself, and would make me the aggressor.—It was not for nothing the fellow opposed my entrance; this last usage has given me back my liberty, and now, my father's will shall be obeyed, without the least reluctance; and so your servant. [*Exit.*

Fel. Oh, stubborn, stubborn heart! what wilt thou do?—Her father's will shall be obeyed!—Ha! that carries her to a cloister, and cuts off all my hopes at once!—By Heaven, she shall not, must not leave me!—No, she is not false—Ha, villain! art thou here? [*Turns upon* LISSARDO.] Tell me, this moment, who this woman was, and, for what intent she was here concealed, or——

Liss. Ay, good sir; forgive me, and I'll tell you the whole truth. [*Falls on his Knees.*

Fel. Out with it, then—

Liss. It—it—it was Mrs. Flora, sir, Donna Violante's woman. You must know, sir, we have had a sneaking kindness for one another, a great while; she was not willing you should know it, so, when she heard your voice, she ran into the clothes-press. I would have told you this at first, but I was afraid of her lady's knowing it. This is the whole truth, as I hope for a whole skin, sir.

Fel. If it be not, I'll not leave you a whole bone

in it, sirrah.—Fly, and observe, if Violante goes directly home.

Liss. Yes, sir, yes.

Fel. Fly, you dog, fly.—[*Exit* LISSARDO.] I must convince her of my faith. Oh, how irresolute is a lover's heart!—how absolute a woman's power!

In vain we strive their tyranny to quit,
In vain we struggle, for we must submit. [Exit.

SCENE IV.

The Terriero de Passa.

Enter COLONEL BRITON, *and* ISABELLA, *veiled.*—GIBBY *at a Distance.*

Col. B. Then you say it is impossible for me to wait on you home, madam?

Isab. I say it is inconsistent with my circumstances, Colonel—and that way impossible for me to admit of it.

Col. B. Consent to go with me, then—I lodge at one Don Frederick's, a merchant, just by here; he is a very honest fellow, and I dare confide in his secrecy.

Isab. Ha! does he lodge there?—'Pray Heaven I am not discovered. [*Aside.*

Col. B. What say you, my charmer?—shall we breakfast together?—I have some of the best tea in the universe.

Isab. Puh! tea! is that the best treat you can give a lady, at your lodgings, Colonel?

Col. B. Well hinted—No, no, no, I have other things at thy service, child.

Isab. What are those things, pray?

Col. B. My heart, soul, and body, into the bargain.

Isab. Has the last no encumbrance upon it? Can you make a clear title, Colonel?

Col. B. All freehold, child, and I'll afford thee a very good bargain. [*Embraces her.*

Gibby. O' my sal, they mak muckle words about it—Ise sare weary with standing, Ise e'en tak a sleep. [*Lies down.*

Isab. If I take a lease, it must be for life, Colonel.

Col. B. Thou shalt have me, as long, or, as little time, as thou wilt, my dear. Come, let's to my lodgings, and we'll sign and seal this minute.

Isab. Oh, not so fast, Colonel; there are many things to be adjusted, before the lawyer and the parson comes.

Col. B. The lawyer and parson!—No, no, you little rogue, we can finish our affairs without the help of the law—or the gospel.

Isab. Indeed but we can't Colonel.

Col. B. Indeed!—Why, hast thou, then, trepanned me out of my warm bed, this morning, for nothing? Why, this is showing a man, half famished, a well-furnished larder, then clapping a padlock on the door, till you starve him quite.

Isab. If you can find in your heart to say grace, Colonel, you shall keep the key.

Col. B. I love to see my meat, before I give thanks, madam; therefore, uncover thy face, child, and I'll tell thee more of my mind—if I like you.

Isab. I dare not risk my reputation upon your ifs, Colonel, and so adieu. [*Going.*

Col. B. Nay, nay, nay, we must not part.

Isab. As you ever hope to see me more, suspend your curiosity now; one step farther loses me for

ever. Show yourself a man of honour, and you shall find me a woman of honour. [*Exit.*

Col. B. Well, for once I'll trust to a blind bargain, madam—[*Kisses her Hand, and parts.*] But I shall be too cunning for your ladyship, if Gibby observes my orders. Ha! what do I see? my rascal asleep! Sirrah, did not I charge you to watch the lady? and is it thus you observe my orders, ye dog?

[*Kicks him all this while, and he shrugs, and rubs his eyes, and yawns.*

Gibby. That's true, an like yer honour; but I thought, that when yence ye had her in yer ane hands, ye might a' ordered her yer sel weel enough without me, en ye ken, en like yer honour.

Col. B. Sirrah, hold your impertinent tongue, and make haste after her. If you don't bring me some account of her, never dare to see my face again.

[*Exit.*

Gibby. Ay, this is bonny wark indeed! to run three hundred mile to this wicked town, and before I can weel fill my weam to be sent a whore-hunting after this black she devil.—What gate sal I gang to speer for this wutch now? Ah, for a ruling elder—or the kirk's treasurer—or his mon—I'd gar my master mak twa' o' this; But I am sure, there's no sick honest people here, or there wud na be sa mickle sculduddrie.

[VIOLANTE *crosses the Stage*—GIBBY *goes up to* VIOLANTE.

Gibby. I vow, madam, but I am glad that ye and I are foregathered.

Vio. What would the fellow have?

Gibby. Nothing—away, madam; wo worthy yer heart, what a muckle deal o' mischief had you like to bring upon poor Gibby!

Vio. The man's drunk.

Gibby. In troth I am not—And gin I had na found

ye, madam, the Laird knows when I should; for my maister bade me ne'er gang hame without tidings of ye, madam.

Vio. Sirrah, get about your business, or I'll have your bones drubbed!

Gibby. Gude faith, my maister has e'en done that t'yer honds, madam.

Vio. Who is your master, sir?

Gibby. Mony a ane speers the gate they ken right weel—it is na sa lang sen ye parted wi' him. I wish he ken ye half as weel as ye ken him.

Vio. Pugh! the creature's mad, or mistakes me for somebody else; and I should be as mad as he to talk to him any longer!

[*Exit* VIOLANTE *into* DON PEDRO'S *House.*

Enter LISSARDO, *at the upper End of the Stage.*

Liss. So, she's gone home, I see—What did that Scots fellow want with her?—I'll try to find it out—perhaps I may discover something that may make my master friends with me again.

Gibby. Are ye gone, madam? a deel scope in yer company, for I'm as weese as I was. But I'll bide and see wha's house it is, gin I can meet with ony civil body to speer at.—My lad, wot ye wha lives here? [*Turns, and sees* LISSARDO.

Liss. Don Pedro de Mendosa.

Gibby. And did you see a lady gang in but now?

Liss. Yes, I did.

Gibby. And d'ye ken her tee?

Liss. It was Donna Violante, his daughter. What the devil makes him so inquisitive? Here is something in it, that is certain. [*Aside.*] 'Tis a cold morning, brother, what think you of a dram?

Gibby. In troth, very weel, sir.

Liss. You seem an honest fellow; pr'ythee, let's drink to our better acquaintance.

Gibby. Wi' aw my heart, sir; gang your gate to the next house, and Ise follow ye.

Liss. Come along then. [*Exit.*

Gibby. Don Pedro de Mendosa! Donna Violante, his daughter!—that's as right as my leg now—Ise need na mair—I'll take a drink, and then to my maister.

Ise bring him news, will mak his heart full blee;
Gin he rewards it not, deel pimp for me. [Exit.

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

DONNA VIOLANTE'S *Lodgings.*

Enter DONNA ISABELLA, *in a gay temper, and* DONNA VIOLANTE, *out of humour.*

Isab. My dear, I have been wishing for you this half hour, to tell you the most lucky adventure!

Vio. And you have pitched upon the most unlucky hour for it, that you could possibly have found in the whole four-and-twenty.

Isab. Hang unlucky hours! I won't think of them—I hope all my misfortunes are past.

Vio. And mine, all to come.

Isab. I have seen the man I like.

Vio. And I have seen the man that I could wish to hate.

Isab. And you must assist me in discovering, whether he can like me or not.

Vio. You have assisted me in such a discovery already, I thank ye.

Isab. What say you, my dear?

Vio. I say, I am very unlucky at discoveries, Isabella; I have too lately made one pernicious to my ease—your brother is false.

Isab. Impossible!

Vio. Most true!

Isab. Some villain has traduced him to you.

Vio. No, Isabella, I loved too well, to trust the eyes of others; I never credit the ill judging world, or form suspicions upon vulgar censures—no, I had ocular proof of his ingratitude.

Isab. Then I am most unhappy—My brother was the only pledge of faith betwixt us; if he has forfeited your favour, I have no title to your friendship.

Vio. You wrong my friendship, Isabella; your own merit entitles you to every thing within my power.

Isab. Generous maid!—But may I not know what grounds you have to think my brother false?

Vio. Another time.—But tell me, Isabella, how can I serve you?

Isab. Thus, then—The gentleman, that brought me hither, I have seen and talked with upon the Terriero de Passa, this morning, and I find him a man of sense, generosity, and good humour; in short, he is every thing that I could like for a husband, and I have despatched Mrs. Flora, to bring him hither; I hope you'll forgive the liberty I have taken.

Vio. Hither! to what purpose?

Isab. To the great universal purpose, matrimony.

Vio. Matrimony! why, do you design to ask him?

Isab. No, Violante, you must do that for me.

Vio. I thank you for the favour you design me, but desire to be excused—I manage my own affairs too ill, to be trusted with those of other people. I can't for my life, admire your conduct, to encourage a person altogether unknown to you: 'Twas very imprudent, to meet him this morning, but much more so to send for him hither, knowing what inconveniency you have already drawn upon me.

Isab. I am not insensible, how far my misfortunes have embarrassed you; and, if you please, will sacrifice my quiet to your own.

Vio. Unkindly urged!—Have I not preferred your happiness, to every thing that's dear to me?

Isab. I know thou hast—then do not deny me this last request, when a few hours, perhaps, may render my condition able to clear thy fame, and bring my brother to thy feet for pardon.

Vio. I wish you don't repent of this intrigue. I suppose he knows you are the same woman that he brought in here last night?

Isab. Not a syllable of that; I met him veiled, and, to prevent his knowing the house, I ordered Mrs. Flora to bring him by the back door, into the garden.

Vio. The very way which Felix comes; if they should meet, there would be fine work!—Indeed, my dear, I can't approve of your design.

Enter FLORA.

Flora. Madam, the colonel waits your pleasure.

Vio. How durst you go upon such a message, mistress, without acquainting me?

Flora. So, I am to be huffed for every thing.

Isab. 'Tis too late to dispute that now, dear Violante; I acknowledge the rashness of the action, but consider the necessity of my deliverance.

Vio. That, indeed, is a weighty consideration; well, what am I to do?

Isab. In the next room I'll give you instructions; In the mean time, Mrs. Flora, show the colonel into this.

Exit FLORA *one Way, and* ISABELLA *and* VIOLANTE *another.*

Enter FLORA *with* COLONEL BRITON.

Flora. The lady will wait on you, presently, sir. [*Exit.*

Col. B. Very well—this is a very fruitful soil—I have not been here quite four-and-twenty hours, and I have three intrigues upon my hands already; but I hate the chase, without partaking of the game——

Enter VIOLANTE, *veiled.*

Ha! a fine sized woman—'Pray Heaven, she proves handsome!—I am come to obey your ladyship's commands.

Vio. Are you sure of that, Colonel?

Col. B. If you be not very unreasonable indeed, madam.—A man is but a man.

[*Takes her Hand, and kisses it.*

Vio. Nay, we have no time for compliments, Colonel.

Col. B. I understand you, madam—Montrez moi votre chambre. [*Takes her in his Arms.*

Vio. Nay, nay, hold, Colonel; my bed-chamber is not to be entered, without a certain purchase.

Col. B. Purchase—humph, this is some kept mistress; I suppose, who industriously lets out her leisure hours. [*Aside.*] Lookye, madam, you must consider, we soldiers are not overstocked with money, but we make ample satisfaction in love; we have a world of courage upon our hands now, you know—then, pr'ythee use a conscience, and I'll try if my pocket can come up to your price.

Vio. Nay, don't give yourself the trouble of draw-

ing your purse, Colonel, my design is levelled at your person, if that be at your own disposal.

Col. B. Ay, that it is, 'faith, madam; and I'll settle it as firmly upon thee——

Vio. As law can do it.

Col. B. Hang law in love affairs; thou shalt have right and title to it out of pure inclination—A matrimonial hint again. [*Aside.*

Vio. Then you have an aversion to matrimony, Colonel? Did you never see a woman in all your travels, that you could like for a wife?

Col. B. A very odd question—Do you really expect that I should speak truth now?

Vio. I do, if you expect to be dealt with, Colonel.

Col. B. Why, then—yes.

Vio. Is she in your country, or this?

Col. B. This is a very pretty kind of a catechism! in this town, I believe, madam.

Vio. Her name is——

Col. B. Ay, how is she called, madam?

Vio. Nay, I ask you that, sir.

Col. B. Oh, oh! why she is called——Pray, madam, how is it you spell your name?

Vio. Oh, Colonel, I am not the happy woman, nor do I wish it.

Col. B. No? I am sorry for that.—What, the devil, does she mean, by all these questions? [*Aside.*

Vio. Come, Colonel, for once, be sincere; perhaps you may not repent it.

Col. B. This is like to be but a silly adventure,—here's so much sincerity required—[*Aside.*] 'Faith, madam, I have an inclination to sincerity, but, I'm afraid you'll call my manners in question.

Vio. Not at all; I prefer truth before compliment, in this affair.

Col. B. Why, then, to be plain with you, madam, a lady last night wounded my heart, by a fall from a

window, whose person I could be content to take, as my father took my mother, till death do us part.—But who she is, or how distinguished, whether maid, wife, or widow, I can't inform you—perhaps you are she?

Vio. Not to keep you in suspense, I am not she; but I can give you an account of her. That lady is a maid of condition—has ten thousand pounds—and, if you are a single man, her person and fortune, are at your service.

Col. B. I accept the offer, with the highest transports! but say, my charming angel, art thou not she?

[*Offers to embrace her.*

Vio. Once again, Colonel, I tell you, I am not she—but at six this evening you shall find her on the Terriero de passa, with a white handkerchief in her hand—Get a priest ready, and you know the rest.

Col. B. I shall infallibly observe your directions, madam.

Enter FLORA *hastily, and whispers* VIOLANTE, *who starts, and seems surprised.*

Vio. Ha! Felix crossing, say you? What shall I do now?

Col. B. You seem surprised, madam.

Vio. Oh, Colonel, my father is coming hither, and if he finds you here, I am ruined.

Col. B. Odslife, madam, thrust me any where! Can't I go out this way?

Vio. No, no, no, he comes that way.—How shall I prevent their meeting?—Here, here, step into my bed-chamber.

Col. B. Oh, the best place in the world, madam.

Vio. And be still, as you value her you love.—Don't stir till you've notice, as ever you hope to have her in your arms.

Col. B. On that condition, I'll not breathe.

[*Exit* COLONEL.

Enter DON FELIX.

Fel. I wonder where this dog of a servant is, all this while—But she is at home, I find—How coldly she regards me!—You look, Violante, as if the sight of me were troublesome to you.

Vio. Can I do otherwise, when you have the assurance to approach me, after what I saw to-day?

Fel. Assurance! rather call it good nature, after what I heard last night. But such regard to honour have I, in my love to you, I cannot bear to be suspected, nor suffer you to entertain false notions of my truth, without endeavouring to convince you of my innocence; so much good nature have I more than you, Violante.—Pray give me leave to ask your woman one question—my man assures me, she was the person you saw at my lodgings.

Flora. I confess it, madam, and ask your pardon.

Vio. Impudent baggage!—not to undeceive me sooner! what business could you have there?

Fel. Lissardo and she, it seems, imitate you and I.

Flora. I love to follow the example of my betters, madam.

Fel. I hope I am justified.

Vio. Since we are to part, Felix, there needs no justification.

Fel. Methinks, you talk of parting, as a thing indifferent to you. Can you forget how I have loved?

Vio. I wish I could forget my own passion, I should, with less concern, remember yours. But for Mrs. Flora——

Fel. You must forgive her.—Must did I say? I fear I have no power to impose, though the injury was done to me.

Vio. 'Tis harder to pardon an injury done to what we love, than to ourselves; but, at your request, Felix, I do forgive her. Go, watch my father, Flora, lest he should awake, and surprise us.

Flora. Yes, madam. [*Exit.*

Fel. Dost thou, then, love me, Violante?

Vio. What need of repetition from my tongue, when every look confesses what you ask?

Fel. Oh, let no man judge of love, but those who feel it! what wondrous magic lies in one kind look! —One tender word destroys a lover's rage, and melts his fiercest passion into soft complaint. Oh, the window, Violante! wouldst thou but clear that one suspicion!—

Vio. Pr'ythee, no more of that, my Felix! a little time shall bring thee perfect satisfaction.

Fel. Well, Violante, on condition you think no more of a monastery, I'll wait with patience for this mighty secret.

Vio. Ah, Felix, love generally gets the better of religion in us women.

Enter FLORA *hastily.*

Flora. Oh, madam, madam, madam! my lord your father, has been in the garden, and locked the back door, and comes muttering this way into the house.

Vio. Then we are caught.—Now, Felix, we are undone.

Fel. Heavens forbid! This is most unlucky—I may conceal myself.

[*Runs to the Door, and pushes it open a little.*

Vio. If he goes in, he'll find the colonel!—No, no, Felix, that's no safe place—my father often goes thither——

Fel. Either my eye deceived me, or I saw a man within—I'll watch him close.

Flora. Oh, invention, invention!—I have it, madam—Here, I'll fetch you a disguise. [*Exit.*

Fel. She shall deal with the devil, if she conveys him out without my knowledge.

Enter FLORA, *with a Riding Hood.*

Flora. Here, sir, put on this.

Fel. Ay, ay, any thing to avoid Don Pedro.

[*She puts it on.*

Vio. Oh, quick, quick! I shall die with apprehension.

Flora. Be sure you don't speak a word.

Fel. Not for the Indies——but I shall observe you closer than you imagine. [*Aside.*

Ped. [*Within.*] Violante, where are you, child?

Enter DON PEDRO.

Why, how came the garden door open?—Ha! how now? who have we here?

Flora. 'Tis my mother, an't please you, sir.

[*She and* FELIX *both courtesy.*

Ped. Your mother! by St. Andrew, she's a strapper! why, you are a dwarf to her.——How many children have you, good woman?

Flora. Oh, dear signor, she cannot hear you; she has been deaf these twenty years.

Ped. Alas, poor woman!—Why, you muffle her up as if she were blind too. Turn up her hood.

Vio. St. Antony forbid! Oh, sir, she has the dreadfullest unlucky eyes—Pray, don't look upon them; I made her keep her hood shut on purpose.—Oh! oh! oh! oh!

Ped. Eyes!—Why, what's the matter with her eyes?

Flora. My poor mother, sir, is much afflicted with the cholic; and, about two months ago, she had it grievously in her stomach, and was over-persuaded to take a dram of filthy English geneva—which immediately flew up into her head, and caused such a defluxion in her eyes, that she could never since bear the daylight.

Ped. Say you so?—Poor woman!—Well, make her sit down, Violante, and give her a glass of wine.

Vio. Let her daughter give her a glass below, sir:—For my part, she has frighted me so I shan't be myself these two hours—I am sure her eyes are evil eyes.

Ped. Well, well, do so.—Evil eyes! there are no evil eyes, child.

Flora. Come along, mother— [*Speaks loud.*

Ped. Take care how you go down.

[*Exeunt* FELIX *and* FLORA.

Vio. I'm glad he's gone. [*Aside.*

Ped. Hast thou heard the news, Violante?

Vio. What news, sir?

Ped. Why, Vasquez tells me that Don Lopez's daughter, Isabella, is run away from her father: that lord has very ill fortune with his children.—Well, I'm glad my daughter has no inclination to mankind, that my house is plagued with no suitors. [*Aside.*

Vio. This is the first word ever I heard of it: I pity her frailty——

Ped. Well said, Violante.—Next week I intend thy happiness shall begin.

Enter FLORA.

Vio. I don't intend to stay so long, thank you, papa. [*Aside.*

Ped. My Lady Abbess writes word she longs to see thee, and has provided every thing in order for thy reception.—Thou wilt lead a happy life, my girl—fifty times before that of matrimony—where an extravagant coxcomb might make a beggar of thee, or an illnatured surly dog break thy heart.

Flora. Break her heart! she had as good have her bones broke, as to be a nun; I am sure, I had rather of the two. You are wondrous kind, sir: but if I had such a father, I know what I would do.

Ped. Why, what would you do, minx, ha?

Flora. I would tell him I had as good a right and title to the law of nature, and the end of the creation, as he had.

Ped. You would, mistress! who the devil doubts it?—A good assurance is a chambermaid's coat of arms, and lying and contriving the supporters.—— Your inclinations are on tiptoe, it seems.—If I were your father, housewife, I'd have a penance enjoined you so strict, that you should not be able to turn you in your bed for a month.—You are enough to spoil your lady, housewife, if she had not abundance of devotion.

Vio. Fie, Flora! are you not ashamed to talk thus to my father?—You said yesterday you would be glad to go with me into the monastery.

Flora. Did I? I told a great lie, then.

Ped. She go with thee! no, no, she's enough to debauch the whole convent.—Well, child, remember what I said to thee: next week——

Vio. Ay, and what I am to do this, too. [*Aside.*]—I am all obedient, sir; I care not how soon I change my condition.

Flora. But little does he know what change she means. [*Aside.*

Ped. Well, child, I am going into the country for two or three days, to settle some affairs with thy uncle; and when I return, we'll proceed for thy happiness, child.—Good b'ye, Violante; take care of thyself. [*Exeunt* DON PEDRO *and* VIOLANTE.

Flora. So, now for the colonel.—Hist, hist, Colonel!

Enter COLONEL BRITON.

Col. B. Is the coast clear?

Flora. Yes, if you can climb; for you must get

over the wash-house, and jump from the garden-wall into the street.

Col. B. Nay, nay, I don't value my neck, if my incognita answers but thy lady's promise.

[*Exeunt* COLONEL BRITON *and* FLORA.

Enter DON FELIX.

Fel. I have lain perdue under the stairs till I watched the old man out. [VIOLANTE *opens the Door.*] 'Sdeath! I am prevented. [FELIX *retires.*

Enter DONNA VIOLANTE.

Vio. Now to set my prisoner at liberty. [*Goes to the Door, where the* COLONEL *is hid.*] Sir! sir! you may appear.

Enter DON FELIX, *following her.*

Fel. May he so, madam? I had cause for my suspicion, I find. Treacherous woman!

Vio. Ha! Felix here! Nay, then all is discovered!

Fel. [*Draws.*] Villain! whoever thou art, come forth, I charge thee, and take the reward of thy adulterous errand.

Vio. What shall I say?

Fel. A coward! Nay, then I'll fetch you out; think not to hide thyself: no, by St. Antony, an altar should not protect thee. [*Exit.*

Vio. What shall I do? I must discover Isabella, or here will be murder.

Enter FLORA.

Flora. I have helped the colonel off clear, madam.

Vio. Sayest thou so, my girl?—Then I am armed.

Enter DON FELIX.

Fel. Where has the devil, in compliance to your sex, conveyed him from my resentment?

Vio. Him! whom do you mean, my dear inquisitive spark? Ha! ha! ha! ha! you will never leave these jealous whims.

Fel. Will you never cease to impose upon me?

Vio. You impose upon yourself, my dear. Do you think I did not see you? Yes, I did, and resolved to to put this trick upon you.

Fel. Trick!

Vio. Yes, trick. I knew you'd take the hint, and soon relapse into your wonted error. How easily your jealousy is fired! I shall have a blessed life with you!

Fel. Was there nothing in it, then, but only to try me?

Vio. Won't you believe your eyes?

Fel. My eyes! No, nor my ears, nor any of my senses; for they have all deceived me. Well, I am convinced that faith is as necessary in love as in religion; for the moment a man lets a woman know her conquest, he resigns his senses, and sees nothing but what she'd have him.

Vio. And as soon as that man finds his love returned, she becomes as arrant a slave as if she had already said after the priest.

Fel. The priest, Violante, would dissipate those fears which cause these quarrels. When wilt thou make me happy?

Vio. To-morrow I will tell thee: my father is gone for two or three days to my uncle's; we have time enough to finish our affairs.—But, pr'ythee, leave me now, lest some accident should bring my father.

Fel. To-morrow, then——

Fly swift, ye hours, and bring to-morrow on!——

But must I leave you now, my Violante?

Vio. You must, my Felix.—We soon shall meet to part no more!

Fel. Oh, rapturous sounds! charming woman!

Thy words and looks have fill'd my heart
With joy, and left no room for jealousy.
Do thou, like me, each doubt and fear remove,
And all to come be confidence and love. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

FREDERICK'S *House.*

Enter DON FELIX *and* FREDERICK.

Fel. This hour has been propitious; I am reconciled to Violante, and you assure me Antonio is out of danger.

Fred. Your satisfaction is doubly mine.

Enter LISSARDO.

Fel. What haste you made, sirrah, to bring me word if Violante went home!

Liss. I can give you very good reasons for my stay, sir.—Yes, sir, she went home.

Fred. Oh, your master knows that, for he has been there himself, Lissardo.

Liss. Sir, may I beg the favour of your ear?

Fel. What have you to say?

[*Whispers, and* FELIX *seems uneasy.*

Fred. Ha! Felix changes colour at Lissardo's news! What can it be?

Fel. A Scots footman, that belongs to Colonel Briton, an acquaintance of Frederick's, say you? The devil! If she be false, by Heaven I'll trace her. Pr'ythee, Frederick, do you know one Colonel Briton, a Scotsman?

Fred. Yes; why do you ask me?

Fel. Nay, no great matter; but my man tells me that he has had some little differences with a servant of his, that's all.

Fred. He is a good, harmless, innocent fellow: I am sorry for it. The colonel lodges in my house; I knew him formerly in England, and met him here by accident last night, and gave him an invitation home. He is a gentleman of good estate, besides his commission; of excellent principles, and strict honour, I assure you.

Fel. Is he a man of intrigue?

Fred. Like other men, I suppose. Here he comes.—

Enter COLONEL BRITON.

Colonel, I began to think I had lost you.

Col. B. And not without some reason, if you knew all.

Fel. There's no danger of a fine gentleman's being lost in this town, sir.

Col. B. That compliment don't belong to me, sir; but, I assure you, I have been very near being run away with.

Fred. Who attempted it?

Col. B. 'Faith, I know not—only that she is a charming woman; I mean, as much as I saw of her.

Fel. My heart swells with apprehension—some accidental rencounter.—

Fred. A tavern, I suppose, adjusted the matter.

Col. B. A tavern! no, no, sir; she is above that

rank, I assure you: this nymph sleeps in a velvet bed, and lodgings every way agreeable.

Fel. Ha! a velvet bed!—I thought you said but now, sir, you knew her not.

Col. B. No more I do, sir.

Fel. How came you then so well acquainted with her bed?

Fred. Ay, ay; come, come, unfold.

Col. B. Why, then, you must know, gentlemen, that I was conveyed to her lodgings by one of Cupid's emissaries, called a chambermaid, in a chair, through fifty blind alleys, who, by the help of a key, let me into a garden.

Fel. A garden! this must be Violante's garden! [*Aside.*

Col. B. From thence conducted me into a spacious room, then dropped me a courtesy, told me her lady would wait on me presently; so, without unveiling, modestly withdrew.

Fel. Damn her modesty! this was Flora. [*Aside.*

Fred. Well, how then, Colonel?

Col. B. Then, sir, immediately from another door, issued forth a lady, armed at both eyes, from whence such showers of darts fell round me, that, had I not been covered with the shield of another beauty, I had infallibly fallen a martyr to her charms; for you must know, I just saw her eyes—Eyes, did I say? no, no, hold; I saw but one eye, though I suppose it had a fellow equally killing.

Fel. But how came you to see her bed, sir?—— 'Sdeath! this expectation gives a thousand racks. [*Aside.*

Col. B. Why, upon her maid's giving notice her father was coming, she thrust me into the bed-chamber.

Fel. Upon her father's coming!

Col. B. Ay; so she said; but, putting my ear to the keyhole of the door, I found it was another lover.

Fel. Confound the jilt! 'twas she without dispute! [*Aside.*

Fred. Ah, poor Colonel! Ha! ha! ha!

Col. B. I discovered they had had a quarrel; but whether they were reconciled or not I can't tell, for the second alarm brought the father in good earnest, and had like to have made the gentleman and I acquainted, but she found some other stratagem to convey him out.

Fel. Contagion seize her, and make her body ugly as her soul! There is nothing left to doubt of now—'Tis plain 'twas she.—Sure he knows me, and takes this method to insult me. 'Sdeath! I cannot bear it. [*Aside.*

Fred. So, when she had despatched her old lover, she paid you a visit in her bed-chamber; ha! Colonel?

Col. B. No, pox take the impertinent puppy! he spoiled my diversion; I saw her no more.

Fel. Very fine! Give me patience, Heaven, or I shall burst with rage. [*Aside.*

Fred. That was hard.

Col. B. Nay, what was worse——But, sir, dear sir, do hearken to this: [*To* FELIX.] The nymph, that introduced me, conveyed me out again, over the top of a high wall, where I ran the danger of having my neck broke, for the father, it seems, had locked the door by which I entered.

Fel. That way I missed him—Damn her invention!—[*Aside.*]—Pray, Colonel—Ha! ha! ha! it's very pleasant, ha! ha!—Was this the same lady you met upon the Terriero de Passa this morning?

Col. B. 'Faith, I can't tell, sir; I had a design to know who that lady was, but my dog of a footman, whom I had ordered to watch her home, fell fast asleep.—I gave him a good beating for his neglect, and I have never seen the rascal since.

Fred. Here he comes.

Enter GIBBY.

Col. B. Where have you been, sirrah?

Gibby. Troth, Ise been seeking ye, an like yer honour, these twa hours and mair. I bring ye glad teedings, sir.

Col. B. What, have you found the lady?

Gibby. Gude faith ha I, sir—and she's called Donna Violante, and her parent Don Pedro de Mendosa, and gin ye will gang wi'me, an like yer honour, Ise mak ye ken the hoose right weel.

Fel. Oh, torture! torture! [*Aside.*

Col. B. Ha! Violante! that's the lady's name of the house where my incognita is: sure it could not be her; at least, it was not the same house, I'm confident. [*Aside.*

Fred. Violante! 'tis false; I would not have you credit him, Colonel.

Gibby. The deel burst my bladder, sir, gin I lee.

Fel. Sirrah, I say you do lie, and I'll make you eat it, you dog; [*Kicks him.*] and if your master will justify you——

Col. B. Not I, 'faith, sir—I answer for nobody's lies but my own: if you please, kick him again.

Gibby. But gin he does Ise na tak it, sir, gin he was a thousand Spaniards. [*Walks about in a Passion.*

Col. B. I owed you a beating, sirrah, and I'm obliged to this gentleman for taking the trouble off my hands; therefore, say no more; d'ye hear, sir? [*Aside to* GIBBY.

Gibby. Troth de I, sir, and feel te. [GIBBY *retires.*

Fred. This must be a mistake, Colonel, for I know Violante perfectly well, and I am certain she would not meet you upon the Terriero de Passa.

Col. B. Don't be too positive, Frederick: now I have some reasons to believe it was that very lady.

Fel. You'd very much oblige me, sir, if you'd let me know these reasons.

Col. B. Sir!

Fel. Sir, I say, I have a right to inquire into these reasons you speak of.

Col. B. Ha! ha! really, sir, I cannot conceive how you, or any man, can have a right to inquire into my thoughts.

Fel. Sir, I have a right to every thing that relates to Violante—and he that traduces her fame, and refuses to give his reasons for it, is a villain. [*Draws.*

Col. B. What the devil have I been doing! Now, blisters on my tongue by dozens! [*Aside.*

Fred. Pr'ythee, Felix, don't quarrel till you know for what: this is all a mistake, I'm positive.

Col. B. Lookye, sir, that I dare draw my sword, I think, will admit of no dispute.—But though fighting's my trade, I'm not in love with it, and think it more honourable to decline this business than pursue it. This may be a mistake; however, I'll give you my honour never to have any affair, directly, or indirectly, with Violante, provided she is your Violante; but if there should happen to be another of her name, I hope you would not engross all the Violantes in the kingdom.

Fel. Your vanity has given me sufficient reasons to believe I'm not mistaken. I'll not be imposed upon, sir.

Col. B. Nor I be bullied, sir.

Fel. Bullied! 'Sdeath! such another word, and I'll nail thee to the wall.

Col. B. Are you sure of that, Spaniard? [*Draws.*

Gibby. [*Draws.*] Say na mair, mon. O' my saul, here's twa to twa. Dinna fear, sir; Gibby stonds by ye for the honour of Scotland. [*Vapours about.*

Fred. By St. Antony, you shan't fight [*Interposes.*] on bare suspicion: be certain of the injury, and then——

Fel. That I will this moment; and then, sir—I hope you are to be found——

Col. B. Whenever you please, sir. [*Exit* FELIX.

Gibby. 'Sbleed, sir! there ne'er was a Scotsman yet that sham'd to show his face. [*Strutting about.*

Fred. So quarrels spring up like mushrooms, in a minute. Violante and he were but just reconciled, and you have furnished him with fresh matter for falling out again; and I am certain, Colonel, Gibby is in the wrong.

Gibby. Gin I be, sir, the mon that tald me leed, and gin he did, the deel be my landlord, and hell my winter-quarters, and a rape my winding-sheet, gin I dee not lick him as lang as I can haud a stick in my hond, now see ye.

Col. B. I am sorry for what I have said, for the lady's sake: but who could divine that she was his mistress? Pr'ythee, who is this warm spark?

Fred. He is the son of one of our grandees, named Don Lopez de Pimentello, a very honest gentleman, but something passionate in what relates to his love. He is an only son, which may, perhaps, be one reason for indulging his passion.

Col. B. When parents have but one child, they either make a madman or a fool of him.

Fred. He is not the only child, he has a sister; but I think, through the severity of his father, who would have married her against her inclination, she has made her escape, and, notwithstanding he has offered five hundred pounds, he can get no tidings of her.

Col. B. Ha! how long has she been missing?

Fred. Nay, but since last night, it seems.

Col. B. Last night! the very time! How went she?

Fred. Nobody can tell; they conjecture, through the window.

Col. B. I'm transported! this must be the lady I caught. What sort of a woman is she?

Fred. Middle-sized, a lovely brown, a fine pouting

lip, eyes that roll and languish, and seem to speak the exquisite pleasure her arms could give.

Col. B. Oh! I am fired with this description—'tis the very she.—What's her name?

Fred. Isabella.—You are transported, Colonel.

Col. B. I have a natural tendency in me to the flesh, thou know'st, and who can hear of charms so exquisite, and yet remain unmoved?——Oh, how I long for the appointed hour! I'll to the Terriero de Passa, and wait my happiness: if she fails to meet me, I'll once more attempt to find her at Violante's, in spite of her brother's jealousy. [*Aside.*]—Dear Frederick, I beg your pardon! but I had forgot I was to meet a gentleman upon business at five: I'll endeavour to despatch him, and wait on you again as soon as possible.

Fred. Your humble servant, Colonel. [*Exit.*

Col. B. Gibby, I have no business with you at present. [*Exit.*

Gibby. That's weel.—Now will I gang and seek this loon, and gar him gang with me to Don Pedro's hoose.—Gin he'll no gang of himself, Ise gar him gang by the lug, sir. Godswarbit! Gibby hates a leer. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

VIOLANTE'S *Lodging.*

Enter VIOLANTE *and* ISABELLA.

Isab. The hour draws on, Violante, and now my heart begins to fail me; but I resolve to venture, for all that.

Vio. What, does your courage sink, Isabella?

Isab. Only the force of resolution a little retreated, but I'll rally it again, for all that.

Enter FLORA.

Flora. Don Felix is coming up, madam.

Isab. My brother! which way shall I get out?—Despatch him as soon as you can, dear Violante.

[*Exit into the Closet.*

Vio. I will.

Enter FELIX, *in a surly Humour.*

Felix, what brings you back so soon? did I not say to-morrow?

Fel. My passion chokes me; I cannot speak—Oh, I shall burst! [*Aside.—Throws himself into a Chair.*

Vio. Bless me! are you not well, my Felix?

Fel. Yes—No—I don't know what I am.

Vio. Heyday! what's the matter now? another jealous whim!

Fel. With what an air she carries it!—I sweat at her impudence! [*Aside.*

Vio. If I were in your place, Felix, I'd chuse to stay at home when these fits of spleen are upon me, and not trouble such persons as are not obliged to bear with them. [*Here he affects to be careless of her.*

Fel. I am very sensible, madam, of what you mean: I disturb you, no doubt; but were I in a better humour, I should not incommode you less: I am too well convinced you could easily dispense with my visit.

Vio. When you behave yourself as you ought to do, no company so welcome—but when you reserve me for your ill nature, I wave your merit, and consider what's due to myself.—And I must be free to tell you, Felix, that these humours of yours will abate, if not absolutely destroy, the very principles of love.

Fel. [*Rising.*] And I must be so free to tell you,

madam, that since you have made such ill returns to the respect that I have paid you, all you do shall be indifferent to me for the future; and you shall find me abandon your empire with so little difficulty, that I'll convince the world your chains are not so hard to break as your vanity would tempt you to believe.—I cannot brook the provocation you give,

Vio. This is not to be borne—insolent! you abandon! you! whom I have so often forbade ever to see me more! Have you not fallen at my feet? implored my favour and forgiveness? did you not trembling wait, and wish, and sigh, and swear, yourself into my heart? Ungrateful man! if my chains are so easily broke as you pretend, then you are the silliest coxcomb living you did not break them long ago; and I must think him capable of brooking any thing, on whom such usage could make no impression.

Fel. I always believed, madam, my weakness was the greatest addition to your power; you would be less imperious had my inclination been less forward to oblige you.—You have indeed forbade me your sight, but your vanity even then assured you I would return, and I was fool enough to feed your pride.—Your eyes, with all their boasted charms, have acquired the greatest glory in conquering me—and the brightest passage of your life is wounding this heart with such arms as pierce but few persons of my rank.

[*Walks about.*

Vio. Matchless arrogance! True, sir, I should have kept measures better with you, if the conquest had been worth preserving; but we easily hazard what gives us no pain to lose.—As for my eyes, you are mistaken if you think they have vanquished none but you: there are men above your boasted rank who have confessed their power, when their misfortune in pleasing you made them obtain such a disgraceful victory.

Fel. Yes, madam, I am no stranger to your victories.

Vio. And what you call the brightest passage of my life, is not the least glorious part of yours.

Fel. Ha! ha! don't put yourself in a passion, madam; for, I assure you, after this day, I shall give you no trouble.—You may meet your sparks on the Terriero de Passa at four in the morning, without the least regard to me—for, when I. quit your chamber, the world shan't bring me back.

Vio. I am so well pleased with your resolution, I don't care how soon you take your leave. But what you mean by the Terriero de Passa at four in the morning, I can't guess.

Fel. No, no, no!—not you.—You was not upon the Terriero de Passa at four this morning!

Vio. No, I was not; but If I were, I hope I may walk where I please, and at what hour I please, without asking your leave?

Fel. Oh, doubtless, madam!—and you might meet Colonel Briton there, and afterwards send your emissary to fetch him to your house——and, upon your father's coming in, thrust him into your bed-chamber —without asking my leave! 'Tis no business of mine, if you are exposed among all the footmen in town—nay, if they ballad you, and cry you about at a half-penny apiece——they may without my leave!

Vio. Audacious!—don't provoke me—don't: my reputation is not to be sported with [*Going up to him.*] at this rate—no, sir, it is not. [*Bursts into Tears.*]—Inhuman Felix!——Oh, Isabella! what a train of ills thou hast brought on me! [*Aside.*

Fel. Ha! I cannot bear to see her weep—a woman's tears are far more fatal than our swords.—[*Aside.*] Oh, Violante!—'Sdeath! what a dog am I! Now have I no power to stir.—Dost not thou know such a person as Colonel Briton? Pr'ythee, tell me—didst not thou meet him at four this morning upon the Terriero de Passa?

Vio. Were it not to clear my fame, I would not answer thee, thou black ingrate!—but I cannot bear to be reproached with what I even blush to think of, much less to act. By Heaven! I have not seen the Terriero de Passa this day.

Fel. Did not a Scotch footman attack you in the street neither, Violante?

Vio. Yes—but he mistook me for another—or he was drunk, I know not which.

Fel. And do not you know this Scotch colonel?

Vio. Pray ask me no more questions: this night shall clear my reputation, and leave you without excuse for your base suspicions. More than this I shall not satisfy you—therefore, pray leave me.

Fel. Didst thou ever love me, Violante?

Vio. I'll answer nothing——You was in haste to begone, just now; I should be very well pleased to be alone, sir. [*She sits down, and turns aside.*

Fel. I shall not interrupt your contemplation.—Stubborn to the last! [*Aside.*

Vio. Did ever woman involve herself as I have done!

Fel. Now would I give one of my eyes to be friends with her, for something whispers to my soul, she is not guilty.—[*He pauses, then pulls a Chair, and sits by her at a little distance, looking at her some time without speaking, then draws a little nearer to her.*] Give me your hand, at parting, however, Violante, won't you —[*He lays his Hand upon her Knee several times.*] won't you—won't you—won't you?

Vio. [*Half regarding him.*] Won't I do what?

Fel. You know what I would have, Violante.—Oh, my heart!

Vio. [*Smiling.*] I thought my chains were easily broke. [*Lays her Hand into his.*

Fel. Draws his Chair close to her, and kisses her Hand in a rapture.] Too well thou knowest thy

strength.—Oh, my charming angel! my heart is all thy own. Forgive my hasty passion—'tis the transport of a love sincere. Oh, Violante! Violante!

Pedro. [*Within.*] Bid Sancho get a new wheel to my chariot presently.

Vio. Bless me, my father returned! What shall we do now, Felix? We are ruined past redemption.

Fel. No, no, no, my love, I can leap from the closet window. [*Runs to the Door where* ISABELLA *is, who claps to the Door, and bolts it withinside.*] Confusion! somebody bolts the door withinside.—Oh, Violante! hast thou again sacrificed me to my rival? [*Draws.*

Vio. By Heaven, thou hast no rival in my heart! —Let that suffice.—Nay, sure you will not let my father find you here—Distraction!

Fel. Indeed but I shall—unless you command this door to be opened, and that way conceal me from his sight. [*He struggles with her to come at the Door.*

Vio. Hear me, Felix—though I were sure the refusing what you ask would separate us for ever, by all that's powerful you shall not enter here. Either you do love me, or you do not: convince me by your obedience.

Fel. That's not the matter in debate—I will know who is in this closet, let the consequence be what it will. Nay, nay, you strive in vain—I will go in.

Vio. You shall not go——

Fel. I will go in.

Enter DON PEDRO.

Ped. Heyday! what's here to do? I will go in, and you sha'n't go in—and I will go in.—Why, who are you, sir!

Fel. 'Sdeath! what shall I say now?

Ped. Don Felix!—Pray, what's your business in my house? ha, sir?

Vio. Oh, sir! what miracle returned you home so

soon? some angel 'twas that brought my father back, to succour the distressed.——This ruffian, he—I cannot call him gentleman—has committed such an uncommon rudeness, as the most profligate wretch would be ashamed to own.

Fel. What does she mean? [*Aside.*

Vio. As I was at my devotion in my closet, I heard a loud knocking at my door, mixed with a woman's voice, which seemed to imply she was in danger.—I flew to the door with the utmost speed, where a lady, veiled, rushed in upon me; who, falling on her knees, begged my protection from a gentleman who, she said, pursued her. I took compassion on her tears, and locked her into this closet; but in the surprise, having left open the door, this very person, whom you see with his sword drawn, ran in, protesting, if I did not give her up to his revenge, he'd force the door.

Fel. What the devil does she mean to do? hang me? [*Aside.*

Vio. I strove with him till I was out of breath, and had you not come as you did, he must have entered. But he's in drink, I suppose; or he could not have been guilty of such an indecorum.

[*Leering at* FELIX.

Ped. I'm amazed!

Fel. The devil never failed a woman at a pinch:—what a tale has she formed in a minute!—In drink, quotha! a good hint: I'll lay hold on't to bring myself off. [*Aside.*

Ped. Fie, Don Felix!—no sooner rid of one broil, but you are commencing another!—To assault a lady with a naked sword, derogates much from the character of a gentleman, I assure you.

Fel. [*Counterfeits drunkenness.*] Who, I assault a lady——upon honour the lady assaulted me, sir, and would have seized this body politic on the king's highway——Let her come out, and deny it if she

can.—Pray, sir, command the door to be opened; and let her prove me a liar, if she knows how.

Ped. Ay, ay!—open the door, Violante, and let the lady come out.—Come, I warrant thee he shan't hurt her!

Fel. No, no, I won't hurt the dear creature.—Now, now, which way will you come off, now? [*Aside.*

Vio. [*Unlocks the Door.*] Come forth, madam!—None shall dare to touch your veil—I'll convey you out with safety, or lose my life.—I hope she understands me! [*Aside.*

Enter ISABELLA *veiled, and crosses the Stage.*

Isab. Excellent girl! [*Exit.*

Fel. The devil!—a woman?—I'll see if she be really so. [*Aside.*

Vio. [*To* FELIX.] Get clear of my father, and follow me to the Terriero de Passa, where all mistakes shall be rectified.

[*Exit, with* ISABELLA.—DON FELIX *offers to follow her.*

Ped. [*Drawing his Sword.*] Not a step, sir, till the lady is past your recovery; I never suffer the laws of hospitality to be violated in my house, sir,—I'll keep Don Felix here, till you see her safe out, Violante.—Come, sir, you and I will take a pipe and a bottle together.

Fel. Damn your pipe, and damn your bottle!—I hate drinking and smoking; and how will you help yourself, old whiskers?

Ped. As to smoking or drinking, you have your liberty; but you shall stay, sir!

Fel. But I won't stay, sir—for I don't like your company; besides, I have the best reasons in the world for my not staying!

Ped. Ay, what's that?

Fel. Why, I am going to be married—and so good b'ye.

Ped. To be married!—it can't be. Why, you are drunk, Felix!

Fel. Drunk! ay, to be sure; you don't think I'd go to be married if I were sober—but, drunk or sober, I am going to be married—and if you won't believe me, to convince you, I'll show you the contract, old gentleman.

Ped. Ay, do; come, let's see this contract, then.

Fel. Yes, yes—I'll show you the contract—I'll show you the contract——Here, sir—here's the contract. [*Draws a Pistol.*

Ped. [*Starting.*] Well, well, I'm convinced—go, go—pray go and be married, sir.

Fel. Yes, yes—I'll go—I'll go and be married; but shan't we take a bottle first?

Ped. No, no—pray, dear sir, go and be married.

Fel. Very well—very well! [*Going.*] but I insist upon your taking one glass, though.

Ped. No, not now—some other time—consider, the lady waits.

Fel. What a cross old fool!—first he will, and then he won't—and then he will, and then he won't! [*Exit.*

Enter SANCHO.

San. Don Lopez de Pimentello is in the next room, signor.

Ped. What the devil does he want? he is not going to be married, too!—Bring him up—he's in pursuit of his son, I suppose! [*Exit* SANCHO.

Enter DON LOPEZ.

Lop. I am glad to find you at home, Don Pedro; I was told that you was going into the country this afternoon.

Ped. That might be, my lord; but I had the misfortune to break the wheel of my chariot, which

obliged me to return.—What is your pleasure with me, my lord?

Lop. I am informed that my daughter is in your house.

Ped. That's more than I know, my lord; but here was your son, just now, as drunk as an emperor.

Lop. My son drunk!—I never saw him in drink in my life.—Where is he, pray, sir?

Ped. Gone to be married.

Lop. Married!—to whom?—I don't know, that he courted any body!

Ped. Nay, I know nothing of that—but I'm sure he showed me the contract.—Within, there!—

Enter SANCHO.

Bid my daughter come hither; she'll tell you another story, my lord.

San. She's gone out in a chair, sir.

Ped. Out in a chair!—What do you mean, sir?

San. As I say, sir;—and your daughter, Donna Isabella, went in another just before her.

Lop. Isabella!

San. And Don Felix followed in another;—I overheard them all bid the chair go to the Terriero de Passa. [*Exit.*

Ped. Ha! what business has my daughter there? I am confounded, and know not what to think.—Within there! [*Exit*

Lop. My heart misgives me plaguily.—Call me an alguazil—I'll pursue them straight. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Street before DON PEDRO's *House.*

Enter LISSARDO.

Liss. I wish I could see Flora—methinks I have an hankering kindness after the slut—we must be reconciled.

Enter GIBBY.

Gibby. Aw my sal, sir, but Ise blithe to find yee here now.

Liss. Ha, brother! give me thy hand, boy.

Gibby. No se fast, se ye me—brether me ne brethers; I scorn a leer as muckle as a thiefe, se ye now, and ye must gang intul this house with me, and justifie to Donna Violante's face, that she was the lady that ganged in here this morn, se ye me, or the deel ha my sal, sir, but ye and I shall be twa folks.

Liss. Justify it to Donna Violante's face, quotha! For what?—Sure you don't know what you say!

Gibby. Troth de I, sir, as weel as yee dee; therefore come along, and make no mair words about it.

Liss. Why, what the devil do you mean?—Don't you consider you are in Portugal?—Is the fellow mad?

Gibby. Fellow! Ise none of yer fellow, sir; and gin the place were hell, I'd gar ye do me justice.—[LISSARDO *going.*] Nay, the deel a feet ye gang.

[*Lays hold of him, and knocks.*

Liss. Ha! Don Pedro himself! I wish I were fairly off. [*Aside.*

Enter DON PEDRO.

Ped. How now? What makes you knock so loud?

Gibby. Gin this be Don Pedro's house, sir, I would speak with Donna Violante, his daughter.

Ped. Ha! what is it you want with my daughter, pray?

Gibby. An she be your daughter, and lik your honour, command her to come out, and answer for herself now, and either justifie or disprove what this chiel told me this morn.

Ped. Why, what did he tell you, ha?

Gibby. By my sal, sir, Ise tell you aw the truth.—My master got a pratty lady upon the how de call't—Passa—here at five this morn, and he gar me watch her heam——and in troth I lodged her here: and meeting this ill-favoured thiefe, se ye me, I speered wha she was—and he tald me her name was Donna Violante, Don Pedro de Mendosa's daughter.

Ped. Ha? my daughter with a man, abroad at five in the morning! Death, hell, and furies! By Saint Antony, I'm undone.

Gibby. Wounds, sir! ye put yer saint intul bonny company.

Ped. Who is your master, you dog, you?

Gibby. You dog, you! 'Sblead, sir! don't call names—I won't tell you who my master is, se ye me, now.

Ped. And who are you, rascal, that know my daughter so well? ha! [*Holds up his Cane.*

Liss. What shall I say, to make him give this Scotch dog a good beating? [*Aside.*] I know your daughter, signor! not I; I never saw your daughter in all my life!

Gibby. [*Knocks him down with his Fist.*] Deel ha my sal, sar, gin ye get no your carich for that lie, now.

Ped. What, hoa! where are all my servants?

Enter DON FELIX, DONA VIOLANTE, COLONEL BRITON, *and* DONA ISABELLA.

Raise the house in pursuit of my daughter!

Col. B. Heyday! what's here to do?

Gibby. This is the loonlike tik, an lik your honor that sent me heam with a *lee this* morn.

Col. B. Come, come, 'tis all well, Gibby; let him rise.

Fel. This is a day of jubilee, Lissardo; no quarrelling with him this day.

Liss. A pox take his fists!—Egad, these Britons are but a word and a blow.

Enter DON LOPEZ.

Lop. So, have I found you, daughter? Then you have not hanged yourself yet, I see!

Col. B. But she is married, my lord.

Lop. Married! Zounds! to whom?

Col. B. Even to your humble servant, my lord, if you please to give us your blessing.

Lop. Why, harkye, mistress, are you really married?

Isab. Really so, my lord.

Lop. And who are you, sir?

Col. B. An honest North Briton by birth, and a colonel by commission, my lord.

Lop. An heretic! the devil!

[*Holding up his Hands.*

Ped. She has played you a slippery trick, indeed, my lord.—Well, my girl, thou hast been to see thy friend married—next week thou shalt have a better husband, my dear.

[*To* FELIX.

Fel. Next week is a little too soon, sir; I hope to live longer than that.

Ped. What do you mean, sir? You have not made a rib of my daughter too, have you?

Vio. Indeed but he has, sir: I know not how, but he took me in an unguarded minute—when my thoughts were not over strong for a nunnery, father.

Lop. Your daughter has played you a slippery trick too, signor.

Ped. But your son shall never be the better for't, my lord; her twenty thousand pounds was left on certain conditions, and I'll not part with a shilling.

Lop. But we have a certain thing, called law, shall make you do justice, sir.

Ped. Well, we'll try that—my lord, much good may it do you with your daughter-in-law. [*Exit.*

Lop. I wish you much joy of your rib! [*Exit.*

Enter FREDERICK.

Fel. Frederick, welcome!—I sent for thee to be partaker of my happiness, and pray give me leave to introduce you to the cause of it.

Fred. Your messenger has told me all, and I sincerely share in all your happiness.

Col. B. To the right about, Frederick—wish thy friend joy.

Fred. I do with all my soul—and, madam, I congratulate your deliverance.——Your suspicions are cleared now, I hope, Felix?

Fel. They are, and I heartily ask the colonel pardon, and wish him happy with my sister; for love has taught me to know that every man's happiness consists in chusing for himself.

Liss. After that rule I fix here. [*To* FLORA.

Flora. That's your mistake; I prefer my lady's service, and turn you over to her that pleaded right and title to you to-day.

Liss. Chuse, proud fool! I shan't ask you twice.

Gibby. What say ye now, lass—will ye ge yer hond to poor Gibby?—Will you dance the reel of Bogie with me?

Inis. That I may not leave my lady, I take you at your word; and though our wooing has been short, I'll, by her example, love you dearly.

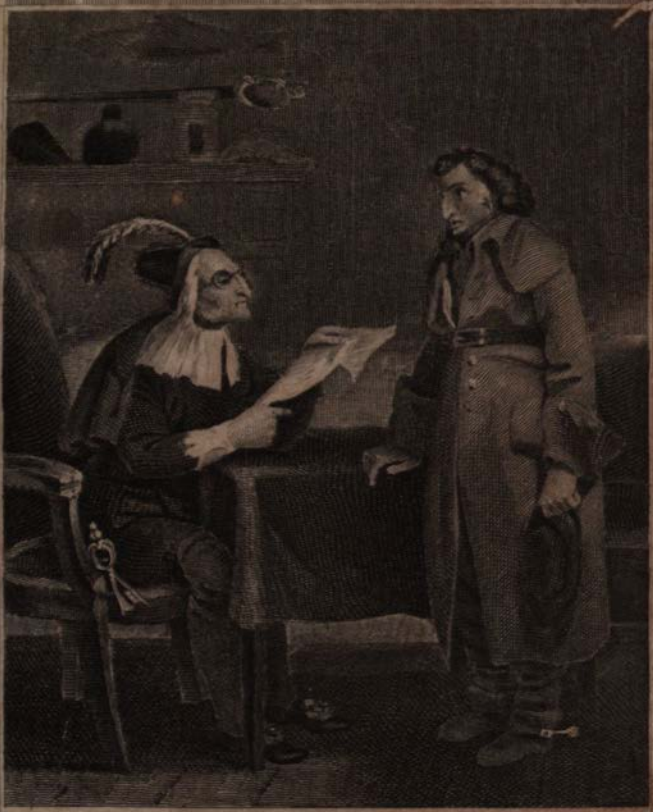
Fel. Now, my Violante, I shall proclaim th[illegible] tues to the world.

Let us no more thy sex's conduct blame,
Since thou'rt a proof, to their eternal fame,
That man has no advantage, but the name.

[*Exeunt*

THE END.

BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE



PERIWINKLE — VERY WELL Mr VILLAGE, I SEE MY UNCLE DOES MENTION IT.

ACT IV. SCENE II

A BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

BY MRS. CENTLIVRE.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

PRINTED, UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS,

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

Xx 1 2

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REMARKS.

Susannah Centlivre, the writer of this play, says of it, in her Dedication to the Duke of Wharton:—

"All that I have to assert in favour of this piece is, that the plot is entirely new, and the incidents wholly owing to my own invention; not borrowed from our own, or translated from the works of any foreign poet; so that they have at least the charm of novelty to recommend them."

It would at present be more honourable to the authoress, that a reader should believe she had inconsiderately adopted the scenes of another, in the following play, than invented them herself. Still, in that supposition, much blame would attach to her taste and morality for the choice she had made in the adoption.

It is deeply to be lamented, that, at the time the most ingenious and witty of the English dramatists lived, there was no restraint, as at this period, upon the immorality of the stage. Plays would have come down to the present age, under such restrictions, less brilliant in humour and repartee, with fewer eulogiums from the admirers of wit; but with fewer reproaches from the wise and the good, upon the evil tendency of the dramatic art.

The happy effect of the moral dramas of this æra, in impressing those persons with just sentiments who attend no other place of instruction but a theatre, has not yet erased from the mind of the prejudiced former ill consequences, from former plays.

Mrs. Centlivre, as a woman, falls more particularly under censure than her cotemporary writers:—though her temptations, to please the degraded taste of the public, were certainly more vehement than those of the authors, who wrote at that time; for they were men whose fortunes were not wholly dependent on their mental exertions; yet, the virtue of fortitude is expected from a female, when delicacy is the object which tries it; and the authoress of this comedy should have laid down her pen, and taken, in exchange, the meanest implement of labour, rather than have imitated the licentious example given her by the renowned poets of those days.

That Mrs. Centlivre was unfortunate from her birth, an orphan in her tender years, and a friendless wanderer at that age when most she required protection, has been already related in the sketch of her life affixed to her comedy of the "Busy Body:" the difficulties under which she had to struggle for subsistence, may plead some excuse to the indulgent, for her having in this one production, out of those which now keep a place upon the stage, applied to that disgraceful support of her Muse, to which her own sex of those times did not blush to attend as auditors. Nor can her offence be treated with excessive rigour in reference to the present time by those, who consider, that this very play of "A bold Stroke for a Wife," is now frequently performed to an elegant, yet applauding audience.

The authoress has displayed high dramatic talents in the conception and execution of the various characters and incidents with which this play abounds.

Herein the genius of Mrs. Centlivre consisted—the dialogue of her dramas might be given by a common writer, but her fable and events are proofs of a very extraordinary capacity.

But, in this comedy, however fertile her imagination has been in forming a multiplicity of occurrences, and diversifying the whole exhibition by variety of character, probability is so often violated, that the effect, though powerful, is that of farce, and not genuine comedy.

To admire Mrs. Centlivre as her talents deserve, it is necessary to read, or to see, her "Wonder, or a Woman keeps a Secret."

The following comedy was brought upon the stage in 1717, when the authoress was in her thirty-eighth year. She enjoyed at that time the intimacy and friendship of Farquhar, Rowe, Steele, and other men of letters, to whom her conversation was highly delightful; as it is said, she had more wit and repartee in herself, than she ever gave to her dramatic characters.

Congreve, who lived in her time, is an exception among the literary men who courted her acquaintance; for he had the humility to be jealous of the favour with which her works were received by the public.

The "Bold Stroke for a Wife" is the drama on which the well known prediction of Wilkes, the celebrated comedian, was delivered, upon his hearing it read previous to its rehearsal. As the first part of that prediction failed,—so is it ardently to be hoped, did the last.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COLONEL FAINWELL	*Mr. Bannister.*
FREEMAN	*Mr. Bartley.*
SIR PHILIP MODELOVE	*Mr. Cherry.*
OBADIAH PRIM	*Mr. Dowton.*
TRADELOVE	*Mr. Wewitzer.*
PERIWINKLE	*Mr. Mathews.*
SACKBUT	*Mr. Palmer.*
SIMON PURE	*Mr. Russell.*
AMINADAB	*Mr. Purser.*
MRS. PRIM	*Miss Pope.*
ANN LOVELY	*Miss Mellon.*
BETTY	*Miss Tidswell.*

A BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Tavern.

COLONEL FAINWELL *and* FREEMAN *over a Bottle.*

Enter SACKBUT.

Free. Mr. Sackbut, we sent for you to take a glass with us. 'Tis a maxim among the friends of the bottle, that as long as the master is in company, one may be sure of good wine.

Sack. Sir, you shall be sure to have as good wine as any I have.—Colonel, your most humble servant; you are welcome to town.

Col. I thank you, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. I am as glad to see you as I should a hundred tun of French claret, custom free.——My service to you, sir. [*Drinks.*]—You don't look so merry as you used to do; ar'n't you well, Colonel?

Free. He has got a woman in his head, Landlord; can you help him?

Sack. If 'tis in my power, I sha'n't scruple to serve my friend.

Col. 'Tis one perquisite of your calling.

Free. You know Mrs. Lovely, Mr. Sackbut?

Sack. Know her! ay, poor Nancy: I have carried her to school many a frosty morning.—Alas, if she's

the woman, I pity you, Colonel: her father, my old master, was the most whimsical out-of-the-way temper'd man I ever heard of, as you will guess by his last will and testament.—This was his only child: he died worth thirty thousand pounds, which he left to his daughter, provided she married with the consent of her guardians: but that she might be sure never to do so, he left her in the care of four men, as opposite to each other as the four elements; each has his quarterly rule, and three months in a year she is oblig'd to be subject to each of their humours, and they are pretty different, I assure you.—She is just come from Bath.

Col. 'Twas there I saw her. She visited a lady who boarded in the same house with me: I liked her person, and found an opportunity to tell her so. She replied, she had no objection to mine; but if I could not reconcile contradictions, I must not think of her; for that she was condemned to the caprice of four persons, who never yet agreed in any one thing, and she was obliged to please them all.

Sack. 'Tis most true, sir; I'll give you a short description of the men, and leave you to judge of the poor lady's condition. One is a kind of virtuoso, a silly half-witted fellow; but positive and surly, fond of every thing antique and foreign, and wears his clothes of the fashion of the last century.

Col. That must be a rare odd fellow!

Sack. Another is a 'Change broker; a fellow that will out lye the devil for the advantage of stock, and cheat his father, that got him, in a bargain: he is a great stickler for trade, and hates every man that wears a sword.

Free. He is a great admirer of the Dutch management, and swears they understand trade better than any nation under the sun.

Sack. The third is an old beau, that has May in his fancy and dress, but December in his face and his

heels: He admires all the new fashions, and those must be French: loves operas, balls, masquerades, and is always the most tawdry of the whole company on a birth day.

Col. These are pretty opposite to one another, truly; —and the fourth, what is he, Landlord?

Sack. A very rigid quaker, whose quarter began this day.——I saw Mrs. Lovely go in, not above two hours ago,—Sir Philip set her down. What think you now, Colonel, is not the poor lady to be pitied?

Col. Ay, and rescu'd too, Landlord.

Free. In my opinion, that's impossible.

Col. There is nothing impossible to a lover.—Will you assist me, if occasion requires?

Sack. In every thing I can, Colonel.

Free. I'll answer for him; and whatever I can serve you in, you may depend on.

Col. First, I'll attack my beau guardian.—You see I'm equipped in his own style of dress for the purpose. Where lives he?

Free. O, you'll find him in the Park at this very time; at least, I never pass through at this hour, without seeing him there.—But what do you intend?

Col. To address him in his own way, and find what he designs to do with the lady.

Free. And what then?

Col. Nay, that I can't tell;—but I shall take my measures accordingly.

Sack. Well, 'tis a mad undertaking, in my mind: but here's to your success, Colonel. [*Drinks.*

Col. 'Tis something out of the way, I confess; but fortune may chance to smile, and I succeed—

Bold was the man who ventur'd first to sea,
But the first vent'ring lovers bolder were.
The path of love's a dark and dang'rous way,
Without a landmark, or one friendly star,
And he that runs the risk deserves the fair. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

The Park.

SIR PHILIP *discovered on a Bench.*

Enter COLONEL FAINWELL.

Col. [*Sits down, and looks at his watch.*] His Grace should have been here above ten minutes since;—do these fellows think their rank is an excuse for want of manners?

[*Puts up his watch, and takes out his snuff box.*

Sir P. May I presume, sir——

Col. Sir, you honour me. [*Presenting the box.*

Sir P. He speaks good English—though he must be a foreigner.—[*Aside.*] The snuff is extremely good. —and the box prodigious fine: the work is French, I presume, sir?

Col. I bought it in Paris, sir——I do think the workmanship pretty neat.

Sir P. Neat! 'tis exquisitely fine, sir. Pray, sir, if I may take the liberty of inquiring, what country is so happy to claim the birth of the finest gentleman in the universe? France, I presume?

Col. Then you don't think me an Englishman?

Sir P. No, upon my soul, don't I.

Col. I am sorry for't.

Sir P Impossible you should wish to be an Englishman! Pardon me, sir, this island could not produce a person of such alertness

Col. As this mirror shows you, sir. [*Puts up a pocket glass to* SIR PHILIP'S *face.*] I know not how to

distinguish you, sir, but your mien and address speak you to be right honourable.

Sir P. Thus great souls judge of others by themselves.—I am only adorned with knighthood, that's all, I assure you, sir; my name is Sir Philip Modelove.

Col. Of French extraction?

Sir P. My father was French.

Col. One may plainly perceive it—There is a certain gaiety peculiar to my nation, (for I will own myself a Frenchman,) which distinguishes us every where.—A person of your figure would be a vast addition to a coronet.

Sir P. I must own I had the offer of a barony about five years ago, but I abhorr'd the fatigue which must have attended it. I could never yet bring myself to join with either party.

Col. You are perfectly in the right, Sir Philip,—a fine person should not embark himself in the slovenly concern of politics: dress and pleasure are objects proper for the soul of a fine gentleman.

Sir P. And love——

Col. O, that's included under the article of pleasure.

Sir P. May I crave your name, sir?

Col. My name is La Fainwell, sir, at your service.

Sir P. The La Fainwells are French, I know; though the name is become very numerous in Great Britain of late years——I was sure you was French the moment I laid my eyes upon you; I could not come into the supposition of your being an Englishman: this island produces few such ornaments.

Col. Pardon me, Sir Philip, this island has two things superior to all nations under the sun.

Sir P. Ah! what are they?

Col. The ladies and the laws.

Sir P. The laws, indeed, do claim a preference of other nations,—but, by my soul, there are fine women

every where.—I must own I have felt their power in all countries.

Col. Are you married, Sir Philip?

Sir P. No; nor do I believe I ever shall enter into that honourable state: I have an absolute *tendre* for the whole sex.

Col. That's more than they have for you, I dare swear. [*Aside.*]—I find I was very much mistaken,—I imagined you had been married to that young lady, whom I saw in the chariot with you this morning in Gracechurch street.

Sir P. Who, Nancy Lovely? I am a piece of a guardian to that lady: you must know, her father, I thank him, joined me with three of the most preposterous old fellows, that, upon my soul, I am in pain for the poor girl;—she must certainly lead apes, as the saying is;—ha, ha!

Col. That's pity, Sir Philip. If the lady would give me leave, I would endeavour to avert that curse.

Sir P. I assure you, Mr. Fainwell, I am for marrying her, for I hate the trouble of a guardian, especially among such wretches; but resolve never to agree to the choice of any one of them,—and I fancy they'll be even with me, for they never came into any proposal of mine yet.

Col. I wish I had your leave to try them, Sir Philip.

Sir P. With all my soul, sir; I can refuse a person of your appearance nothing.

Col. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you.

Sir P. But do you really like matrimony?

Col. I believe I could with that lady.

Sir P. The only point in which we differ——But you are master of so many qualifications, that I can excuse one fault; for I must think it a fault in a fine gentleman; and that you are such, I'll give it under my hand.

Col. I wish you'd give me your consent to marry Mrs. Lovely under your hand, Sir Philip.

Sir P. I'll do't, if you'll step into St. James's coffee-house, where we may have pen and ink;—though I can't foresee what advantage my consent will be to you, without you could find a way to get the rest of the guardians.—But I'll introduce you, however:—she is now at a quaker's, where I carried her this morning, when you saw us in Gracechurch street.—I assure you, she has an odd *ragout* of guardians, as you will find when you hear the characters, which I'll endeavour to give you as we go along.—Hey, *Pierre, Jaque, Renno!*—where are you all, scoundrels?——Order the chariot to Saint James's coffee-house.

Col. *Le Noir, la Brun, la Blanc.—Morbleu, ou sont ces Coquins la? Allons, Monsieur le Chevalier.*

Sir P. Ah, *Pardonez moi, Monsieur.*

Col. Not one step, upon my soul, Sir Philip.

Sir P. The best bred man in Europe, positively.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

OBADIAH PRIM'S *House.*

Enter ANN LOVELY, *followed by* MRS. PRIM.

Mrs. P. Then thou wilt not obey me: and thou dost really think those fallals become thee!

Ann L. I do, indeed.

Mrs. P. Now will I be judged by all sober people, if I don't look more like a modest woman than thou dost, Ann.

Ann L. More like a hypocrite, you mean, Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. P. Ah, Ann, Ann! that wicked Philip Modelove will undo thee.—Satan so fills thy heart with

pride, during the three months of his guardianship, that thou becomest a stumbling block to the upright.

Ann L. Pray who are they? Are the pinch'd cap and formal hood the emblems of sanctity? Does your virtue consist in your dress, Mrs. Prim?

Enter OBADIAH PRIM.

Ob. P. Not stripp'd of thy vanity, yet, Ann!—Why dost thou not make her put it off, Sarah?

Mrs. P. She will not do it.

Ann L. I cannot think my father meant this tyranny! No, you usurp an authority which he never intended you should take.

Ob. P. Hark thee, dost thou call good counsel tyranny? Do I, or my wife tyrannize, when we desire thee in all love to put off thy tempting attire, and veil thy provokers to sin?

Ann L. Deliver me, good Heaven! or I shall go distracted. [*Walks about.*] I wish I were in my grave! Kill me, rather than treat me thus?

Ob. P. Kill thee! ha, ha! thou thinkest thou art acting some lewd play, sure:—Kill thee! art thou prepared for death, Ann Lovely? No, no, thou wouldst rather have a husband, Ann:—thou wantest a gilt coach, with six lazy fellows behind, to flaunt it in the ring of vanity, among the princes and rulers of the land—who pamper themselves with the fatness thereof; but I will take care, that none shall squander away thy father's estate: thou shalt marry none such, Ann.

Ann L. Wou'd you marry me to one of your own canting sect?

Ob. P. Yea, verily, no one else shall ever get my consent, I do assure thee, Ann.

Ann L. And I do assure thee, Obadiah, that I will as soon turn papist, and die in a convent.

Mrs. P. O, wickedness!

Ann L. O, stupidity!

Ob. P. O, blindness of heart!

Ann L. Thou blinder of the world, don't provoke me, least I betray your sanctity, and leave your wife to judge of your purity:—What were the emotions of your spirit, when you squeez'd Mary by the hand last night in the pantry?—Don't you remember that, Mr. Prim?

Mrs. P. What does she say, Obadiah?

Ob. P. She talketh unintelligibly, Sarah.—Which way did she hear this? This should not have reach'd the ears of the wicked ones:—verily, it troubleth me. [*Aside.*

Enter AMINADAB.

Amin. Philip Modelove, whom they call Sir Philip, is below, and such another with him; shall I send them up.

Ob. P. Yea. [*Exit* AMIN.

Enter SIR PHILIP *and* COLONEL FAINWELL.

Sir P. How dost thou do, friend Prim? Odso! my she-friend here too! What, are you documenting Miss Nancy; reading her a lecture upon the pinch'd coif, I warrant ye.

Mrs. P. I am sure thou didst never read her any lecture that was good.—My flesh riseth so at these wicked ones, that prudence adviseth me to withdraw from their sight. [*Exit.*

Ob. P. Verily, Philip, thou wilt spoil this maiden.

Sir P. I find we still differ in opinion; but that we may none of us spoil her, pr'ythee, Prim, let us consent to marry her.—I have sent for our brother guardians to meet me here about this very thing—madam, will you give me leave to recommend a hus-

band to you?—Here's a gentleman, whom in my mind, you can have no objection to.

[*Presents the* COLONEL *to her, she looks another Way.*

Col. A fine woman, a fine horse, and fine equipage, are the finest things in the universe: and if I am so happy to possess you, madam, I shall become the envy of mankind, as much as you outshine your whole sex.

[*As he takes her Hand to kiss it, he endeavours to put a Letter into it; she lets it drop*—— PRIM *takes it up.*

Ann L. I have no ambition to appear conspicuously ridiculous, sir. [*Turning from him.*

Col. So fail the hopes of Fainwell.

Ann L. Ha! Fainwell! 'Tis he! What have I done? Prim has the letter, and it will be discover'd. [*Aside.*

Ob. P. Friend, I know not thy name, so cannot call thee by it; but thou seest thy letter is unwelcome to the maiden, she will not read it.

Ann L. Nor shall you; [*Snatches the Letter.*] I'll tear it in a thousand pieces, and scatter it, as I will the hopes of all those that any of you shall recommend to me. Oh, Fainwell! whatever thy contrivance be, prosper it Heaven. [*Aside.—Exit.*

Sir P. Ha! Right woman, faith!

Col. Excellent woman!

Ob. P. Friend, thy garb savoureth too much of the vanity of the age for my approbation; nothing that resembleth Philip Modelove shall I love, mark that;——therefore, friend Philip, I advise thee to shuffle him again with the rest of mankind, for I like him not.

Sir P. In my opinion, this is very inhuman treatment, as to the lady, Mr. Prim.

Ob. P. Thy opinion and mine happen to differ as much as our occupations, friend; busines requireth

my presence, and folly thine; and so I must bid thee farewell. [*Exit.*

Sir P. Here's breeding for you, Mr. Fainwell! Gad take me,

Half my estate I'd give to see them bit.

Col. I hope to bite you all, if my plot hit.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

The Tavern.

SACKBUT *and the* COLONEL, *in an Egyptian Dress.*

Sack. A lucky beginning, colonel,——you have got the old beau's consent.

Col. Ay, he's a reasonable creature; but the other three will require some pains.—Shall I pass upon old Periwinkle, think you? 'Egad, in my mind, I look as antique as if I had been preserved in the Ark. I hope he'll come.

Sack. I wish all my debts would come as sure.

Col. Let's have a bottle of sack, Landlord; our ancestors drank sack.

Sack. You shall have it.

Col. And whereabouts is the trap-door you mentioned?

Sack. There's the conveyance, sir. [*Exit.*

Col. Now, if I should cheat all these roguish guar-

dians, and carry off my mistress in triumph, it would be what the French call a *grand coup d'eclat*—Odso! here comes Periwinkle.——Ah! Deuce take this beard; pray Jupiter it does not give me the slip, and spoil all.

Enter SACKBUT, *with Wine, and* PERIWINKLE *following.*

Sack. Sir, this gentleman hearing you have been a great traveller, and a person of fine speculation, begs leave to take a glass with you; he is a man of a curious taste himself.

Col. The gentleman has it in his face and garb; sir, you are welcome.

Per. Sir, I honour a traveller, and men of your inquiring disposition; the oddness of your habit pleases me extremely; 'tis very antique, and for that I like it.

Col. 'Tis very antique, sir;—this habit once belonged to the famous Claudius Ptolemeus, who lived in the year one hundred and thirty-five.

Sack. If he keeps up to the sample, he shall lye with the devil for a bean-stack, and win it every straw. [*Aside.*

Per. A hundred and thirty-five! why, that's prodigious now!—Well, certainly 'tis the finest thing in the world to be a traveller.

Col. For my part, I value none of the modern fashions a fig-leaf.

Per. No more don't I, sir; I had rather be the jest of a fool, than his favourite.—I am laugh'd at here for my singularity——This coat, you must know, sir, was formerly worn by that ingenious and very learned person, Mr. John Tradescant, of Lambeth.

Col. John Tradescant! Let me embrace you, sir—John Tradescant was my uncle, by my mother's side; and I thank you for the honour you do his memory; he was a very curious man indeed.

Per. Your uncle, sir——Nay, then 'tis no wonder that your taste is so refined; why you have it in your blood.——My humble service to you, sir; to the immortal memory of John Tradescant, your never-to-be-forgotten uncle. [*Drinks.*

Col. Give me a glass, Landlord.

Per. I find you are primitive, even in your wine; Canary was the drink of our wise forefathers; 'tis balsamic, and saves the charge of 'pothecaries' cordials—Oh! that I had lived in your uncle's days! or rather, that he were now alive;—Oh! how proud he'd be of such a nephew!

Sack. Oh, pox! that would have spoil'd the jest. [*Aside.*

Per. A person of your curiosity must have collected many rarities.

Col. I have some, sir, which are not yet come ashore; as an Egyptian idol.

Per. Pray, what may that be?

Col. It is, sir, a kind of an ape, which they formerly worshipp'd in that country; I took it from the breast of a female mummy.

Per. Ha, ha! our women retain part of their idolatry to this day, for many an ape lies on a lady's breast, ha, ha!——

Sack. A smart old thief. [*Aside.*

Col. Lookye, sir, do you see this little phial?

Per. Pray you, what is it?

Col. This is call'd Poluflosboio.

Per. Poluflosboio!——It has a rumbling sound.

Col. Right, sir; it proceeds from a rumbling nature.——This water was part of those waves which bore Cleopatra's vessel when she sail'd to meet Antony.

Per. Well, of all that ever travelled, none had a taste like you.

Col. But here's the wonder of the world.——This,

sir, is called Zona, or Moros Musphonon; the virtues of this are inestimable.

Per. Moros Musphonon! What in the name of wisdom can that be?—To me it seems a plain belt.

Col. This girdle has carried me all the world over.

Per. You have carried it, you mean.

Col. I mean as I say, sir.—Whenever I am girded with this, I am invisible; and by turning this little screw, can be in the court of the Great Mogul, the Grand Signior, and King George, in as little time as your cook can poach an egg.

Per. You must pardon me, sir, I can't believe it.

Col. If my Landlord pleases, he shall try the experiment immediately.

Sack. I thank you kindly, sir, but I have no inclination to ride post to the devil.

Col. No, but you sha'n't stir a foot, I'll only make you invisible.

Sack. But if you could not make me visible again.

Per. Come, try it upon me, sir, I am not afraid of the devil, nor all his tricks.——'Sbud, I'll stand 'em all.

Col. There, sir, put it on.——Come, Landlord, you and I must face the East. [*They turn about.*] Is it on, sir?

Per. 'Tis on. [*They turn about again.*

Sack. Heaven protect me! Where is he?

Per. Why here, just where I was.

Sack. Where, where, in the name of virtue? Ah, poor Mr. Periwinkle!—Egad, look to't, you had best, sir; and let him be seen again, or I shall have you burnt for a wizard.

Col. Have patience, good Landlord.

Per. But really don't you see me now?

Sack. No more than I see my grandmother, that died forty years ago.

Per. Are you sure you don't lye? Methinks I

stand just where I did, and see you as plain as I did before.

Sack. Ah! I wish I could see you once again.

Col. Take off the girdle, sir. [*He takes it off.*

Sack. Ah, sir, I am glad to see you with all my heart. [*Embraces him.*

Per. This is very odd; certainly there must be some trick in't.——Pray, sir, will you do me the favour to put it on yourself.

Col. With all my heart.

Per. But first I'll secure the door.

Col. You know how to turn the screw, Mr. Sackbut?

Sack. Yes, yes. Come, Mr. Periwinkle, we must turn full east.

[*They turn, the* COLONEL *sinks down the Trap Door.*

Col. 'Tis done; now turn. [*They turn.*

Per. Ha! Mercy upon me; my flesh creeps upon my bones.——This must be a conjurer, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. He is the devil, I think.

Per. Oh, Mr. Sackbut, why do you name the de-, when perhaps he may be at your elbow?

vil*Sack.* At my elbow, marry, Heaven forbid.

Col. Are you satisfied? [*From under the Stage.*

Per. Yes, sir, yes—How hollow his voice sounds!

Sack. Yours seem'd just the same—Faith, I wish this girdle were mine, I'd sell wine no more. Harkye, Mr. Periwinkle—[*Takes him aside till the* COLONEL *rises again.*]—if he would sell this girdle, you might travel with great expedition.

Col. But it is not to be parted with for money.

Per. I am sorry for't, sir: because I think it the greatest curiosity I ever heard of.

Col. By the advice of a learned physiognomist in Grand Cairo, who consulted the lines in my face, I returned to England, where he told me I should find

a rarity in the keeping of *four* men, which I was born to possess for the benefit of mankind; and the *first* of the *four* that gave me his consent, I should present him with this girdle——Till I have found this jewel, I shall not part with the girdle.

Per. What can that rarity be! Didn't he name it to you?

Col. Yes, sir: he called it a chaste, beautiful, unaffected woman.

Per. Pish! Women are no rarities——I never had any great taste that way. I married, indeed, to please my father, and I had a girl to please my wife; but she and the child (thank Heaven) died together——Women are the very gewgaws of the creation; playthings for boys, who, when they write man, they ought to throw aside.

Sack. A fine lecture to be read to a circle of ladies. [*Aside.*

Per. What woman is there, dressed in all the pride and foppery of the times, can boast of such a foretop as the cockatoo?

Col. I must humour him—[*Aside.*]—Such a skin as the lizard?

Per. Such a shining breast as the humming bird?

Col. Such a shape as the antelope?

Per. Or, in all the artful mixture of their various dresses, have they half the beauty of one box of butterflies?

Col. No, that must be allowed—For my part, if it were not for the benefit of mankind, I'd have nothing to do with them, for they are as indifferent to me as a sparrow or a flesh-fly.

Per. Pray, sir, what benefit is the world to reap from this lady?

Col. Why, sir, she is to bear me a son, who shall revive the art of embalming, and the old Roman manner of burying their dead; and, for the benefit of pos-

terity, he is to discover the longitude, so long sought for in vain.

Per. Odd! these are valuable things, Mr. Sackbut!

Sack. He hits it off admirably, and t'other swallows it like sack and sugar. [*Aside.*]——Certainly this lady must be your ward, Mr. Periwinkle, by her being under the care of four persons.

Per. By the description it should——Egad, if I could get that girdle, I'd ride with the sun, and make the tour of the world in four and twenty hours. [*Aside.*] And are you to give that girdle to the first of the four guardians that shall give his consent to marry that lady, say you, sir?

Col. I am so order'd, when I can find him.

Per. I fancy I know the very woman—her name is Ann Lovely?

Col. Excellent!—he said, indeed, that the first letter of her name was L.

Per. Did he really?——Well, that's prodigiously amazing, that a person in Grand Cairo should know any thing of my ward.

Col. Your ward!

Per. To be plain with you, sir, I am one of those four guardians.

Col. Are you indeed, sir? I am transported to find the man who is to possess this Moros Musphonon is a person of so curious a taste—Here is a writing drawn up by that famous Egyptian, which if you will please to sign, you must turn your face full north, and the girdle is yours.

Per. If I live till this boy is born, I'll be embalm'd, and sent to the Royal Society when I die.

Col. That you shall most certainly.

Enter DRAWER.

Draw. Here's Mr. Staytape, the taylor, enquires for you, Colonel.

Col. Who do you speak to, you son of a whore?
Per. Ha! colonel. [*Aside.*
Col. Confound the blundering dog! [*Aside.*
Draw. Why to Colonel———
Sack. Get you out, you rascal.
[*Kicks him out, and goes after him.*
Draw. What the devil is the matter?
Col. This dog has ruin'd all my schemes, I see by Periwinkle's looks. [*Aside.*
Per. How finely I should have been chous'd!—Colonel, you'll pardon me that I did not give you your title before—it was pure ignorance, faith it was ——Pray—hem, hem!—Pray, Colonel, what post had this learned Egyptian in your regiment?
Col. A pox of your sneer. [*Aside.*]—I don't understand you, sir.
Per. No! that's strange! I understand you, Colonel ——An Egyptian of Grand Cairo! ha, ha, ha!—I am sorry such a well-invented tale should do you no more service——We old fellows can see as far into a millstone as them that pick it—I am not to be trick'd out of my trust—mark that.
Col. The devil! I must carry it off; I wish I were fairly out. [*Aside.*]—Lookye, sir; you may make what jest you please—but the stars will be obey'd, sir; and, depend upon't, I shall have the lady, and you none of the girdle.
Now must bob-wig and business come in play;
A thirty thousand pound girl leads the way.
[*Exit.*
Per. The stars! ha, ha!—No star has favoured you it seems——The girdle! ha, ha, ha! none of your legerdemain tricks can pass upon me——Why, what a pack of trumpery has this rogue picked up?—His Pagod, Poluflosboio, his Zonas, Moros Musphonons, and the devil knows what——But I'll take care——Ha, gone!—Ay, 'twas time to sneak off.——Soho! the house!

Enter SACKBUT.

Where is this trickster? Send for a constable, I'll have this rascal before the lord mayor; I'll Grand Cairo him, with a pox to him—I believe you had a hand in putting this imposture upon me, Sackbut.

Sack. Who I, Mr. Periwinkle? I scorn it; I perceiv'd he was a cheat, and left the room on purpose to send for a constable to apprehend him, and endeavour'd to stop him when he went out—But the rogue made but one step from the stairs to the door, call'd a coach, leap'd into it, and drove away like the devil, as Mr. Freeman can witness, who is at the bar, and desires to speak with you; he is this minute come to town.

Per. Send him in. [*Exit* SACKBUT.] What a scheme this rogue has laid! How I should have been laugh'd at, had it succeeded!

Enter FREEMAN.

Mr. Freeman, I had like to have been imposed upon here by the veriest rascal——

Free. I am sorry to hear it—The dog flew for't; he had not 'scap'd me, if I had been aware of him; Sackbut struck at him, but miss'd his blow, or he had done his business for him.

Per. I believe you never heard of such a contrivance, Mr. Freeman, as this fellow had found out.

Free. Mr. Sackbut has told me the whole story, Mr. Periwinkle; but now I have something to tell you of much more importance to yourself.——I happen'd to lie one night at Coventry, and knowing your uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, I paid him a visit, and, to my great surprise, found him dying.

Per. Dying?

Free. Dying, in all appearance; the servants weeping, the room in darkness: the 'pothecary, shaking

his head, told me the doctors had given him over; and then there are small hopes, you know.

Per. I hope he made his will—he always told me he would make me his heir.

Free. I have heard you say as much, and therefore resolved to give you notice. I should think it would not be amiss if you went down to-morrow morning.

Per. It is a long journey, and the roads very bad.

Free. But he has a great estate, and the land very good——Think upon that.

Per. Why, that's true, as you say; I'll think upon it: in the mean time, I give you many thanks for your civility, Mr. Freeman, and should be glad of your company to dine with me.

Free. I am oblig'd to be at Jonathan's coffee-house at two, and now it is half an hour after one; if I despatch my business, I'll wait on you; I know your hour.

Per. You shall be very welcome, Mr. Freeman; and so your humble servant. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

JONATHAN'S *Coffee House, in 'Change Alley. A Crowd of People with Rolls of Paper in their Hands; a Bar, and* COFFEE BOYS *waiting.*

Enter TRADELOVE *and* STOCK JOBBERS, *with Rolls of Paper.*

1 *Stock.* South Sea at seven eighths; who buys?

2 *Stock.* South Sea bonds due at Michaelmas, 1718. Class lottery tickets?

Trade. Harkye, Gabriel, you'll pay the difference of that stock we transacted for t'other day?

Gab. Ay, Mr. Tradelove, here's a note for the money. [*Gives him a Note.*

Trade. I would fain bite the spark in the brown coat; he comes very often into the Alley, but never employs a broker.

Enter COLONEL *and* FREEMAN.

Mr. Freeman, your servant! Who is that gentleman?

Free. A Dutch merchant just come to England? but harkye, Mr. Tradelove—I have a piece of news will get you as much as the French king's death did if you are expeditious. But how does your ward, Ann Lovely.

Trade. Pshaw! never trouble your head about her, man?

Free. [*Showing him a Letter.*] Read there; I received it just now from one that belongs to the Emperor's minister.

Trade. [Reads.] *Sir, as I have many obligations to you, I cannot miss any opportunity to show my gratitude; this moment my lord has received a private express, that the Spaniards have rais'd their siege from before Cagliari; if this proves any advantage to you, it will answer both the ends and wishes of, sir, your most obliged humble servant,*

HENRICUS DUSSELDORP.

Postscript.—*In two or three hours the news will be public.*

May one depend upon this, Mr. Freeman?

[*Aside to* FREEMAN.

Free. You may.—I never knew this person send me a false piece of news in my life.

Trade. Sir, I am much obliged to you—'Egad, 'tis rare news.—Who sells South Sea for next week?

Stock-Job. [*All together.*] I sell; I, I, I, I, I sell.

1 *Stock.* I'll sell five thousand pounds for next week at five eighths.

2 *Stock.* I'll sell ten thousand, at five eighths, for the same time.

Trade. Nay, nay, hold, hold, not all together, gentlemen; I'll be no bull, I'll buy no more than I can take: will you sell ten thousand pounds at a half, for any day next week, except Saturday?

1 *Stock.* I'll sell it you, Mr. Tradelove.

[FREEMAN *whispers to One of the* BROKERS.

1 *Stock.* [*Aside.* The Spaniards rais'd the siege of Cagliari! I don't believe one word of it.

2 *Stock.* Rais'd the siege! as much as as you have rais'd the monument.

Free. 'Tis rais'd, I assure you, sir.

1 *Stock.* What will you lay on't?

Free. What you please.

1 *Stock.* Why, I have a brother upon the spot, in the Emperor's service; I am certain, if there were any such thing, I should have had a letter. Let it come where it will, I'll hold you fifty pounds 'tis false.

Free. 'Tis done.

2 *Stock.* I'll lay you a brace of hundreds upon the same.

Free. I'll take you.

Trade. I'll lay any man a brace of thousands the siege is rais'd.

Free. The Dutch merchant is your man to take in.

[*Aside to* TRADELOVE.

Trade. Does he not know the news?

Free. Not a syllable; if he did, he would bet a hundred thousand pounds as soon as one penny;—he's plaguy rich, and a mighty man at wagers.

[*To* TRADELOVE.

Trade. Say you so—'Egad, I'll bite him, if possible.——Are you from Holland, sir?

Col. Ya, mynheer.

Trade. Had you the news before you came away?

Col. What believe you, mynheer?

Trade. What do I believe? Why, I believe that the Spaniards have actually rais'd the siege of Cagliari.

Col. What duyvel's news is dat? 'Tis niet waer, mynheer——'tis no true, sir.

Trade. 'Tis so true, mynheer, that I'll lay you two thousand pounds upon it.——You are sure the letter may be depended upon, Mr. Freeman?

Free. Do you think I would venture my money, if I were not sure of the truth of it?

[*Aside to* TRADELOVE.

Col. Two duosend pound, mynheer, 'tis gadaen—dis gentleman sal hold de gelt.

[*Gives* FREEMAN *Money.*

Trade. With all my heart—this binds the wager.

Free. You have certainly lost, mynheer; the siege is rais'd, indeed.

Col. Ik sal ye dubbled honden, if you please.

Free. I am let into the secret, therefore won't win your money.

Trade. Ha, ha, ha! I have snapped the Dutchman, faith, ha, ha! this is no ill day's work.—Pray, may I crave your name, mynheer?

Col. Myn naem, mynheer! myn naem is Jan van Timtamtirelereletta Heer Fainwell.

Trade. Zounds! 'tis a damn'd long name; I shall never remember it—Myn Heer van, Tim, Tim, Tim, ——What the devil is it?

Free. Oh, never heed, I know the gentleman, and will pass my word for twice the sum.

Trade. That's enough.

Col. You'll hear of me sooner than you'll wish, old gentleman, I fancy. [*Aside.*]—You'll come to Sackbut's, Freeman. [*Exit.*

Free. Immediately. [*Aside to the* COLONEL.

Trade. Mr. Freeman, I give you many thanks for your kindness——

Free. I fear you'll repent, when you know all, [*Aside.*

Trade. Will you dine with me?

Free. I'm engag'd at Sackbut's; adieu. [*Exit.*

Trade. Sir, your humble servant. Now, I'll see what I can do upon 'Change with my news. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Tavern.

Enter FREEMAN *and* COLONEL.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! The old fellow swallowed the bait as greedily as a gudgeon.

Col. I have him, faith, ha, ha, ha!—His two thousand pounds secure——If he would keep his money, he must part with the lady, ha, ha!——

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Joy, joy, Colonel! the luckiest accident in the world.

Col. What say'st thou?

Sack. This letter does your business.

Col. [Reads.] *To Obadiah Prim, Hosier, near the building call'd the Monument, in London.*

Free. A letter to Prim! How came you by it?

Sack. Looking over the letters our post-woman brought, as I always do, to see what letters are directed to my house (for she can't read,) you must know, I 'spy'd this directed to Prim, so paid for it among the rest; I have read it, and fancy you'll like the project.—Read, read, Colonel.

Col. [Reads.] *Friend Prim, there is arrived from Pennsylvania one Simon Pure, a leader of the faithful,*

who hath sojourned with us eleven days, and hath been of great comfort to the brethren.—He intendeth for the quarterly meeting in London; I have recommended him to thy house. I pray thee treat him kindly, and let thy wife cherish him, for he's of weakly constitution——he will depart from us the third day; which is all from thy friend in the faith,

AMINADAB HOLDFAST.

Ha, ha, excellent! I understand you, Landlord; I am to personate this Simon Pure, am I not?

Sack. Don't you like the hint?

Col. Admirably well!

Free. 'Tis the best contrivance in the world, if the right Simon gets not there before you.

Col. No, no, the Quakers never ride post. Suppose, Freeman, you should wait at the Bristol coach, that if you see any such person, you might contrive to give me notice.——

Free. I will—the country dress and boots, are they ready?

Sack. Yes, yes, every thing,—sir.

[*Bell rings.—Exit.*

Free. Thou must despatch Periwinkle first—remember his uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, and his whole history.

Col. Never fear, let me alone for that—but what's the steward's name?

Free. His name is Pillage.

Col. Enough——

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Zounds! Mr. Freeman! yonder is Tradelove in the damned'st passion in the world—He swears you are in the house—he says you told him you were to dine here.

Free. I did so, ha, ha, ha! he has found himself bit already.——

Col. The devil! he must not see me now.

Sack. I told him I expected you here, but you were not come yet——

Free. Very well—make you haste out, Colonel, and let me alone to deal with him: where is he?

Sack. In the King's Head.

Col. You remember what I told you?

Free. Ay, ay, very well. Landlord, let him know I am come in——and now, Mr. Pillage, success attend you. [*Exit* SACKBUT.

Col. Mr. Proteus rather——

From changing shape, and imitating Jove,
I draw the happy omens of my love.

[*Exit* COLONEL.

Enter TRADELOVE.

Free. Zounds! Mr. Tradelove, we're bit, it seems.

Trade. Bit, do you call it, Mr. Freeman! I am ruin'd.——Pox on your news.

Free. Pox on the rascal that sent it me.——

Trade. Sent it you! Why Gabriel Skinflint has been at the minister's, and spoke with him, and he has assur'd him 'tis every syllable false; he received no such express.

Free. I know it: I this minute parted with my friend, who protested he never sent me any such letter——Some roguish stock-jobber has done it on purpose to make me lose my money, that's certain: I wish I knew who he was, I'd make him repent it—I have lost 300l. by it.

Trade. What signifies your three hundred pounds to what I have lost? There's two thousand pounds to that Dutchman with a cursed long name, besides the stock I bought: the devil! I could tear my flesh—I must never show my face upon 'Change more;——for, by my soul, I can't pay it.

Free. I am very much concern'd that I was the

occasion, and wish I could be an instrument of retrieving your misfortune; for my own, I value it not. Adso, a thought comes into my head, that, well improv'd, may be of service.

Trade. Ah! there's no thought can be of any service to me, without paying the money, or running away.

Free. How do we know? What do you think of my proposing Mrs. Lovely to him? He is a single man—and I heard him say he had a mind to marry an English woman—nay, more than that, he said some body told him you had a pretty ward—he wish'd you had betted her instead of your money.

Trade. Ay, but he'd be hang'd before he'd take her instead of the money; the Dutch are too covetous for that; besides, he did not know that there were three more of us, I suppose?

Free. So much the better; you may venture to give him your consent, if he'll forgive you the wager: it is not your business to tell him, that your consent will signify nothing.

Trade. That's right, as you say; but will he do it, think you?

Free. I can't tell that; but I'll try what I can do with him.

Trade. You must extol her beauty, double her portion, and tell him I have the entire disposal of her; and that she can't marry without my consent:—and that I am a covetous rogue, and will never part with her without a valuable consideration.

Free. Ay, ay, let me alone for a lie at a pinch.

Trade. 'Egad, if you can bring this to bear, Mr. Freeman, I'll make you whole again; I'll pay the three hundred pounds you lost, with all my soul.

Free. Well, I'll use my best endeavours——Where will you be?

Trade. At home; pray Heaven you prosper——If

I were but the sole trustee now, I should not fear it. Who the devil would be a guardian?

If, when cash runs low, our coffers t' enlarge,
We can't, like other stocks, transfer our charge.
[*Exit.*

Free. Ha, ha, ha!—he has it. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

PERIWINKLE'S *House.*

Enter PERIWINKLE *on one Side, and* FOOTMAN *on the other.*

Foot. A gentleman from Coventry inquires for you, sir.

Per. From my uncle, I warrant you:—bring him up. [*Exit* FOOT.] ——This will save me the trouble, as well as expense of a journey.

Enter COLONEL.

Col. Is your name Periwinkle, sir?

Per. It is, sir.

Col. I am sorry for the message I bring—My old master, whom I served these forty years, claims the sorrow due from a faithful servant to an indulgent master. [*Weeps.*

Per. By this, I understand, sir, my uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is dead.

Col. He is, sir, and he has left you heir to seven hundred a year, in as good abbey-land as ever paid Peterpence to Rome.—I wish you long to enjoy it, but my tears will flow when I think of my benefactor.— [*Weeps.*] Ah, he was a good man!—he has not left many of his fellows——the poor lament him sorely.

Per. I pray, sir, what office bore you?

Col. I was his steward, sir.

Per. I have heard him mention you with much respect:—your name is——

Col. Pillage, sir.

Per. Ay, Pillage, I do remember he called you Pillage.——Pray, Mr. Pillage, when did my uncle die?

Col. Monday last, at four in the morning. About two he sign'd his will, and gave it into my hands, and strictly charged me to leave Coventry the moment he expired; and deliver it to you with what speed I could. I have obey'd him, sir, and there is the will.

[*Gives it to* PER.

Per. 'Tis very well, I'll lodge it in the Commons.

Col. There are two things which he forgot to insert, but charg'd me to tell you, that he desir'd you'd perform them as readily as if you had found them written in the will—which is, to remove his corpse, and bury him by his father, at St. Paul's Covent Garden, and to give all his servants mourning.

Per. That will be a considerable charge: a pox of all modern fashions. [*Aside.*] Well, it shall be done!—Mr. Pillage, I will agree with one of death's fashion-mongers, call'd an undertaker, to go down, and bring up the body.

Col. I hope, sir I shall have the honour to serve you in the same station I did your worthy uncle; I have not many years to stay behind him, and would gladly spend them in the family where I was brought up—— [*Weeps.*] He was a kind and tender master to me.

Per. Pray don't grieve, Mr. Pillage, you shall hold your place, and every thing else which you held under my uncle.——You make me weep to see you so concern'd. [*Weeps.*] He liv'd to a good old age, and we are all mortal.

Col. We are so, sir, and therefore I must beg you to sign this lease:—you'll find Sir Toby has taken particular notice of it in his will——I could not get it time enough from the lawyer, or he had sign'd before he died. [*Gives him a Paper.*

Per. A lease! for what?

Col. I rented a hundred a year of Sir Toby upon lease, which lease expires at Lady-day next. I desire to renew it for twenty years—that's all, sir.

Per. Let me see. [*Looks over the Lease.*] Very well——Let's see what he says in his will about it.—[*Lays the Lease upon the Table, and looks on the Will.*]——Ho, here it is—*The farm lying—now in possession of Samuel Pillage—suffer him to renew his lease—at the same rent*——Very well, Mr. Pillage, I see my uncle does mention it, and I'll perform his will. Give me the lease—[COLONEL *gives it him, he looks upon it, and lays it upon the Table.*] Pray you step to the door, and call for a pen and ink, Mr. Pillage.

Col. I have a pen and ink in my pocket, sir, [*Pulls out an Ink-horn.*] I never go without that.

Per. I think it belongs to your profession—[*He looks upon the pen, while the* COLONEL *changes the Lease, and lays down the Contract.*] I doubt this is but a sorry pen, though it may serve to write my name. [*Writes.*

Col. Little does he think what he signs. [*Aside.*

Per. There is your lease, Mr. Pillage. [*Gives him the Paper.*] Now I must desire you to make what haste you can down to Coventry, and take care of every thing, and I'll send down the undertaker for the body; do you attend it up, and whatever charge you are at, I'll repay you.

Col. You have paid me already, I thank you, sir. [*Aside.*

Per. Will you dine with me?

Col. I would rather not; there are some of my neighbours which I met as I came along, who leave

the town this afternoon, they told me, and I should be glad of their company down.

Per. Well, well, I won't detain you.

Col. I don't care how soon I am out. [*Aside.*

Per. I will give orders about mourning.

Col. You will have cause to mourn, when you know. [*Aside.—Exit.*

Per. Seven hundred a year!—I wish he had died seventeen years ago:—What a valuable collection of rarities might I have had by this time!—Odso, I have a good mind to begin my travels now;——let me see ——I am but sixty!—My father, grandfather, and great grandfather, reach'd ninety odd;—I have almost forty years good:—Let me consider——what will seven hundred a year amount to in——ay, in thirty years? I'll say but thirty——thirty times seven is seven times thirty——that is——just twenty-one thousand pounds,—'Tis a great deal of money!

With nature's curious works I'll raise my fame,
That men, till Doomsday, may repeat my name.
[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

A Tavern.

FREEMAN *and* TRADELOVE *over a Bottle.*

Trade. Come, Mr. Freeman, here's Mynheer Jan Van Tim—tam—tam——I shall never think of that Dutchman's name.

Free. Mynheer Jan Van Timtamtirelereletta Heer Van Fainwell.

Trade. Ay, Heer Van Fainwell; I never heard such a confounded name in my life.—Here's his health, I say.

Free. With all my heart.

Trade. Faith, I never expected to have found so generous a thing in a Dutchman.

Enter COLONEL, *dressed for the Dutch Merchant.*

Col. Ha, Mynheer Tradelove, Ik ben sorry voor your troubles—maer Ik sal you easie maken, Ik will de gelt nie hebben——

Trade. I shall for ever acknowledge the obligation, sir.

Free. But you understand upon what condition, Mr. Tradelove—Mrs. Lovely.

Col. Ya, de Frow sal al te regt setten, Mynheer.

Trade. With all my heart, mynheer; you shall have my consent to marry her freely——

Free. Well, then, as I am a party concerned between you, Mynheer Jan Van Timtamtirelereletta Heer Van Fainwell shall give you a discharge of your wager under his own hand,——and you shall give him your consent to marry Mrs. Lovely under yours, ——that is the way to avoid all manner of disputes hereafter.

Col. Ya, weeragtig.

Trade. Ay, ay, so it is, Mr. Freeman, I'll give it under mine this minute. [*Sits down to write.*

Col. And so Ik sal. [*Does the same.*

Free. So ho, house!

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Do you call, gentlemen?

Free. Ay, Mr. Sackbut, we shall want your hand here——

Trade. There, mynheer, there's my consent, as amply as you can desire; but you must insert your own name, for I know not how to spell it; I have left a blank for it. [*Gives the* COLONEL *a Paper.*

Col. Ya Ik sal dat well doen——

Free. Now, Mr. Sackbut, you and I will witness it. [*They write.*

Col. Daer, Mynheer Tradelove, is your discharge.
[*Gives him a Paper.*

Trade. Be pleas'd to witness this receipt too, gentlemen. [FREEMAN *and* SACKBUT *put their Hands.*

Free. Ay, ay, that we will.

Col. Well, mynheer, ye most meer doen, ye most myn voorsprach to de frow syn.

Free. He means you must recommend him to the lady.——

Trade. That I will, and to the rest of my brother guardians.

Col. Wat, voor, de duyvel, heb you meer guardians?

Trade. Only three, mynheer.

Sack. But Mr. Tradelove is the principal, and he can do a great deal with the rest, sir.

Free. And he shall use his interest, I promise you, mynheer.

Trade. I will say all that ever I can think on to recommend you, mynheer; and if you please, I'll introduce you to the lady.

Col. Well, dat is wear——Maer ye must first spreken of myn to de frow, and to oudere gentlemen.

Free. Ay, that's the best way,—and then I and the Heer Van Fainwell will meet you there.

Trade. I will go this moment, upon honour——Your most obedient humble servant.——My speaking will do you little good, mynheer, ha ha! we have bit you, faith, ha, ha!

Well—my debt's discharged, and for Nan,
He has my consent—to get her, if he can. [*Exit.*

Col. Ha, ha, ha; this was a masterpiece of contrivance, Freeman.—Come, pursue the fickle goddess while she's in the mood——Now for the Quaker.

Col. That's the hardest task.

Of all the counterfeits perform'd by man,
A soldier makes the simplest puritan. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

PRIM'S *House.*

Enter MRS. PRIM *and* ANN LOVELY, *in Quakers' Dresses, meeting.*

Mrs. P. So, now I like thee, Ann; art thou not better without thy monstrous hoop-coat and patches?—If Heaven should make thee so many black spots upon thy face, wou'd it not fright thee, Ann?

Ann L. If it shou'd turn your inside outward, and show all the spots of your hypocrisy, t'would fright me worse!

Mrs. P. My hypocrisy! I scorn thy words, Ann, I lay no baits.

Ann L. If you did, you'd catch no fish.

Mrs. P. Well, well, make thy jests. Thou art corrupted with reading lewd plays, and filthy romances ——good for nothing but to lead youth into the high-road of fornication.——Ah! I wish thou art not already too familiar with the wicked ones.

Ann L. Too familiar with the wicked ones? Pray no more of those freedoms, madam——I am familiar with none so wicked as yourself:——How dare you thus talk to me! you, you, you unworthy woman you. [*Bursts into tears.*

Enter TRADELOVE.

Trade. What, in tears, Nancy? What have you done to her, Mrs. Prim, to make her weep?

Ann L. Done to me! I wonder I keep my senses among you;—Don't think that I'll be still the fool which you have made me.——No, I'll wear what I please——go when and where I please——and keep what company I think fit, and not what you shall direct——I will.

Trade. For my part, I do think all this very reasonable, Mrs. Lovely—'tis fit you should have your liberty, and for that very purpose I am come.

Enter OBADIAH PRIM, *with a Letter in his Hand.*

Ob. P. This letter recommendeth a speaker; 'tis from Aminadab Holdfast, of Bristol; peradventure he will be here this night; therefore, Sarah, do thou take care for his reception—— [*Gives her the Letter.*

Mrs. P. I will obey thee. [*Exit.*

Ob. P. What art thou in the dumps for, Ann?

Trade. We must marry her, Mr. Prim.—I have a husband for you, a man that knows how to improve your fortune; one that trades to the four corners of the globe.

Ann L. And would send me for a venture perhaps.

Trade. One that will dress you in all the pride of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America—a Dutch merchant, my girl.

Ob. P. Lookye, it is in vain to talk; when I meet a man worthy of her, she shall have my leave to marry him.

Ann L. Provided he be of the faithful——Was there ever such a swarm of caterpillars to blast the hopes of a woman! [*Aside.*] O, Fainwell! where are thy promises to free me from these vermin? [*Exit.*

Enter AMINADAB, *and whispers to* PRIM.

Amin. One Simon Pure inquireth for thee.

Ob. P. Friend Tradelove, business requireth my presence.

Trade. O, I shan't trouble you—pox take him for an unmannerly dog—However, I have kept my word with my Dutchman, and will introduce him too for all you. *Exit.*

Enter COLONEL, *in a Quaker's Habit.*

Ob. P. Friend Pure, thou art welcome; how is it with friend Holdfast, and all friends in Bristol? Timothy Littleworth, John Slenderbrain, and Christopher Keepfaith?

Col. A goodly company! [*Aside.*] They are all in health, I thank thee for them.

Ob. P. Friend Holdfast writes me word, that thou camest lately from Pennsylvania, how do all friends there?

Col. What the devil shall I say? I know just as much of Pennsylvania as I do of Bristol. [*Aside.*

Ob. P. Do they thrive?

Col. Yea, friend, the blessing of their good works fall upon them.

Enter MRS. PRIM, *and* ANN LOVELY.

Ob. P. Sarah, know our friend Pure.

Mrs. P. Thou art welcome. [*He salutes her.*

Col. Here comes the sum of all my wishes—How charming she appears even in that disguise! [*Aside.*

Ob. P. Why dost thou consider the maiden so attentively, friend?

Col. I will tell thee: about four days ago I saw a vision—This very maiden, but in vain attire, standing on a precipice; and heard a voice, which called me by my name—and bid me put forth my hand and save her from the pit——I did so, and methought the damsel grew unto my side.

Mrs. P. What can that portend?

Ob. P. The damsel's conversion—I am persuaded.

Ann L. That's false, I'm sure—— [*Aside.*

Ob. P. Wilt thou use the means, friend Pure?

Col. Means! What means? Is she not thy daughter, already one of the faithful?

Mrs. P. No, alas! she's one of the ungodly.

Ob. P. Pray thee, mind what this good man will say unto thee; he will teach thee the way that thou shouldest walk, Anne.

Ann L. I know my way without his instruction: I hop'd to have been quiet when once I had put on your odious formality here.

Col. Then thou wearest it out of compulsion, not choice, friend?

Ann L. Thou art in the right of it, friend.——

Mrs. P. Art thou not asham'd to mimic the good man? Ah! thou art a stubborn girl.

Col. Mind her not; she hurteth not me—If thou wilt leave her alone with me, I will discuss some few points with her, that may perchance soften her stubbornness, and melt her into compliance.

Ob. P. Content: I pray thee put it home to her.—Come, Sarah, let us leave the good man with her.

Ann L. [*Catching hold of* PRIM, *he breaks loose, and exit.*] What do you mean—to leave me with this old enthusiastical canter? Don't think, because I comply'd with your formality, to impose your ridiculous doctrine upon me.

Col. I pray thee, young woman, moderate thy passion.

Ann L. I pray thee walk after thy leader, you will but lose your labour upon me.—These wretches will certainly make me mad!

Col. I am of another opinion; the spirit telleth me I shall convert thee, Ann.

Ann L. 'Tis a lying spirit, don't believe it.

Col. Say'st thou so? Why then thou shalt convert me, my angel. [*Catching her in his Arms.*

Ann L. [*Shrieks.*] Ah! monster, hold off, or I'll tear thy eyes out.

Col. Hush! for Heaven's sake—dost thou not know me? I am Fainwell.

Ann L. Fainwell!

Enter OLD PRIM.

Oh, I'm undone! Prim here——I wish with all my soul I had been dumb.

Ob. P. What is the matter? Why did'st thou shriek out, Ann?

Ann L. Shriek out! I'll shriek and shriek again, cry murder, thieves, or any thing, to drown the noise of that eternal babbler, if you leave me with him any longer.

Ob. P. Was that all? Fie, fie, Ann.

Col. I'll bring down her stomach, I'll warrant thee ——Leave us, I pray thee.

Ob. P. Fare thee well:—verily I was afraid the flesh had got the better of the spirit. [*Exit.*

Col. My charming, lovely woman! [*Embraces her.*

Ann L. What mean'st thou by this disguise, Fainwell?

Col. To set thee free, if thou wilt perform thy promise.

Ann L. Make me mistress of my fortune, and make thy own conditions.

Col. This night shall answer all my wishes.—See here, I have the consent of three of thy guardians already, and doubt not but Prim will make the fourth. [PRIM *listening.*

Ob. P. I would gladly hear what arguments the good man useth to bend her. [*Aside.*

Ann L. Thy words give me new life, methinks.

Ob. P. What do I hear? He hath mollified her. ——Oh, wonderful conversion!

Col. Ha! Prim listening.—Seem to be edified, and give them hopes that thou wilt turn Quaker, and

leave the rest to me. [*Aloud.*] I am glad to find that thou art touch'd with what I said unto thee, Ann; another time I will explain the other article unto thee; in the mean while, be thou dutiful to our friend Prim.

Ann L. I shall obey thee in every thing.

Enter OBADIAH PRIM.

Ob. P. Oh, what a prodigious change is here!—Thou hast wrought a miracle, friend! Verily, thou dost rejoice me exceedingly, friend; will it please thee to walk into the next room, and refresh thyself ——Come, take the maiden by the hand.

Col. We will follow thee.

Enter AMINADAB.

Amin. There is another Simon Pure inquireth for thee, master.

Col. The devil there is. [*Aside.*

Ob. P. Another Simon Pure! I do not know him, is he any relation of thine?

Col. No, friend, I know him not——Pox take him, I wish he were in Pennsylvania again with all my soul. [*Aside.*

Ann L. What shall I do? [*Aside.*

Ob. P. Bring him up.

Col. Humph! then one of us must go down, that's certain—Now impudence assist me.

Enter SIMON PURE.

Ob. P. What is thy will with me, friend?

S. Pu. Didst thou not receive a letter from Aminadab Holdfast, of Bristol, concerning one Simon Pure?

Ob. P. Yea, and Simon Pure is already here, friend.

Col. And Simon Pure will stay here, friend, if it be possible. [*Aside.*

S. Pu. That's an untruth, for I am he.

Col. Take thou heed, friend, what thou dost say; I do affirm that I am Simon Pure.

S. Pu. Thy name may be Pure, friend, but not that Pure.

Col. Yea, that Pure, which my good friend, Aminadab Holdfast, wrote to my friend Prim about; the same Simon Pure that came from Pennsylvania, and sojourned in Bristol eleven days; thou wouldst not take my name from me, wouldst thou?——till I have done with it. [*Aside.*

S. Pu. Thy name! I'm astonish'd?

Col. At what? at thy own assurance?

[*Going up to him,* SIMON PURE *starts back.*

S. Pu. Avaunt, Satan, approach me not; I defy thee and all thy works.

Ann L. Oh, he'll outcant him—Undone, undone for ever. [*Aside.*

Col. Hark thee, friend, thy sham will not take—— Don't exert thy voice, thou art too well acquainted with Satan to start at him, thou wicked reprobate—What can thy design be here.

Enter a SERVANT, *and gives* PRIM *a Letter.*

Ob. P. One of these must be a counterfeit, but which I cannot say.

Col. What can that letter be? [*Aside.*

S. Pu. Thou must be the devil, friend, that's certain; for no human power can stock so great a falsehood.

Ob. P. This letter sayeth that thou art better acquainted with that prince of darkness than any here.—Read that, I pray thee, Simon. [*Gives it the* COL.

Col. 'Tis Freeman's hand—[*Reads.*] *There is a design formed to rob your house this night, and cut your throat; and for that purpose there is a man disguised like a Quaker, who is to pass for one Simon Pure; the gang, whereof I am one, though now resolved to rob no*

more, has been at Bristol; one of them came in the coach with the Quaker, whose name he hath taken; and, from what he hath gathered from him, formed that design, and did not doubt but he should impose so far upon you, as to make you turn out the real Simon Pure, and keep him with you. Make the right use of this. Adieu.——Excellent well! [*Aside.*

Ob. P. Dost thou hear this? [*To* S. PURE.

S. Pu. Yea, but it moveth me not; that, doubtless, is the impostor. [*Pointing at the* COLONEL.

Col. Ah! thou wicked one—now I consider thy face, I remember thou didst come up in the leathern conveniency with me—thou hadst a black bob wig on, and a brown camblet coat with brass buttons—— Canst thou deny it, ha?

S. Pu. Yea, I can, and with a safe conscience too, friend.

Ob. P. Verily, friend, thou art the most impudent villain I ever saw.

Ann L. Nay, then I'll have a fling at him.—[*Aside.*] I remember the face of this fellow at Bath—Ay, this is he that pick'd my Lady Raffle's pocket in the Grove——Don't you remember that the mob pump'd you, friend?——This is the most notorious rogue——

S. Pu. What dost provoke thee to seek my life?—Thou wilt not hang me, wilt thou, wrongfully?

Ob. P. She will do thee no hurt, nor thou shalt do me none; therefore get thee about thy business, friend, and leave thy wicked course of life, or thou may'st not come off so favourably every where. Simon, I pray thee put him forth.

Col. Go, friend, I would advise thee, and tempt thy fate no more.

S. Pu. Yea, I will go, but it shall be to thy confusion; for I shall clear myself: I shall return with some proofs that shall convince thee, Obadiah, that thou art highly imposed upon. [*Exit.*

Col. Then there will be no staying for me, that's certain—What the devil shall I do? [*Aside.*

Ob. P. What monstrous works of iniquity are there in this world, Simon!

Col. Yea, the age is full of vice——'Sdeath, I am so confounded, I know not what to say. [*Aside.*

Ob. P. Thou art disorder'd, friend——art thou not well?

Col. My spirit is greatly troubled, and something telleth me, that tho' I have wrought a good work in converting this maiden, this tender maiden, yet my labour will be in vain: for she will, yea, this very damsel will, return again to that abomination from whence I have retriev'd her, as if it were, yea, as if it were out of the jaws of the fiend.

Ob. P. Good lack, thinkest thou so?

Ann L. I must second him. [*Aside.*] What meaneth this struggle within me? I feel the spirit resisteth the vanities of this world, but the flesh is rebellious, yea, the flesh—I greatly fear the flesh and the weakness thereof——hum—

Ob. P. The maid is inspir'd. [*Aside.*] Prodigious! The damsel is filled with the spirit—Sarah.

Enter MRS. PRIM.

Mrs. P. I am greatly rejoiced to see such a change in our beloved Ann. I came to tell thee that supper stayeth for thee.

Col. I am not disposed for thy food, my spirit longeth for more delicious meat!—fain would I redeem this maiden from the tribe of sinners, and break those cords asunder wherewith she is bound—hum—

Ann L. Something whispers in my ears, methinks that I must be subject to the will of this good man, and from him only must hope for consolation.——

Ob. P. What a revelation is here! My soul rejoiceth, yea, rejoiceth, I say, to find the spirit within thee; for lo, it moveth thee with *natural* agitation

yea, with *natural* agitation, towards this good man—yea, it *stirreth*, as one may say—yea, verily I say it *stirreth* up thy inclination—yea, as one would *stir* a pudding.—Hum.

Ann L. I see, I see! the spirit guiding of thy hand, good Obadiah Prim, and now behold thou art signing thy consent—hum——

Col. And I will take thee in all spiritual love for an helpmate, yea, for the wife of my bosom.

Mrs. P. The spirit hath greatly moved them both,—friend Prim, thou must consent, there's no resisting of the spirit!

Ob. P. Fetch me the pen and ink, Sarah—and my hand shall confess its obedience to the spirit.

Col. I wish it were over.

Enter MRS. PRIM, *with Pen and Ink.*

Ann L. I tremble lest this quakering rogue should return and spoil all. [*Aside.*

Ob. P. Here, friend, do thou write what the spirit prompteth, and I will sign it. [COL. *sits down.*

Mrs. P. Verily, Ann, it greatly rejoiceth me to see thee reformed from that original wickedness wherein I found thee.

Ann L. I do believe thou art, and I thank thee—

Col. [Reads.] *This is to certify all whom it may concern, that I do freely give all my right and title, in Ann Lovely, to Simon Pure, and my full consent that she shall become his wife, according to the form of marriage. Witness my hand.*

Ob. P. That's enough, give me the pen.

[*Signs it.*

Enter BETTY, *running to* MRS. LOVELY.

Betty. Oh! madam, madam, here's the quaking man again, he has brought a coachman, and two or three more.

Ann L. Ruin'd past redemption! [*Aside to* COL.

Col. No, no, one minute sooner had spoil'd all; but now——here's company coming, friend, give me the paper. [*Going up to* PRIM *hastily.*

Ob. P. Here it is, Simon; and I wish thee happy with the maiden.

Ann L. 'Tis done; and now, devil, do thy worst.

Enter SIMON PURE *and* COACHMAN, *&c.*

S. Pu. Look thee, friend, I have brought these people to satisfy thee that I am not that impostor which thou didst take me for: this is the man that did drive the leathern conveniency, and brought me from Bristol—and this is——

Col. Lookye, friend, to save the court the trouble of examining witnesses—I plead guilty—ha! ha!

Ob. P. How's this? Is not thy name Pure, then?

Col. No, really, sir; I only made bold with this gentleman's name——but I here give it up safe and sound; it has done the business which I had occasion for, and now I intend to wear my own, which shall be at his service upon the same occasion at any time. ——Ha, ha, ha!

S. Pu. Oh! the wickedness of the age!

Ob. P. I am struck dumb with thy impudence. Ann, thou hast deceiv'd me—and perchance undone thyself.

Mrs. P. Thou art a dissembling baggage, and shame will overtake thee. [*Exit.*

S. Pu. I am grieved to see thy wife so much troubled: I will follow and console her. [*Exit.*

Enter AMINADAB.

Amin. Thy brother guardians inquire for thee; here is another man with them.

Ann L. Who can that other man be? [*To the* COLONEL.

Col. 'Tis one Freeman, a friend of mine, whom I ordered to bring the rest of the guardians here.

Enter SIR PHILIP, TRADELOVE, PERIWINKLE, *and* FREEMAN.

Free. [*To the* COLONEL.] Is all safe? did my letter do you service?

Col. All, all's safe! ample service. [*Aside.*

Sir P. Miss Nancy, how dost do, child?

Ann L. Don't call me miss, friend Philip; my name is Ann, thou knowest.

Sir P. What, is the girl metamorphos'd?

Ann L. I wish thou wert so metamorphos'd.—Ah! Philip, throw off that gaudy attire, and wear the clothes becoming thy age.

Sir P. My age! the woman is possess'd.

Trade. Harkye, Mrs. Lovely, one word with you.

[*Takes hold of her Hand.*

Col. This maiden is my wife, thanks to friend Prim, and thou hast no business with her.

[*Takes her from him.*

Trade. His wife! harkye, Mr. Freeman.

Per. Why, you have made a very fine piece of work of it, Mr. Prim.

Sir P. Married to a Quaker! thou art a fine fellow to be left guardian to an orphan truly——there's a husband for a young lady!

Col. When I have put on my beau clothes, Sir Philip, you'll like me better——

Sir P. Thou wilt make a very scurvy beau——friend——

Col. I believe I can prove it under your hand that you thought me a very fine gentleman in the Park t'other day: will you take a pinch, Sir Philip——One of the finest snuff-boxes you ever saw.

[*Offers him Snuff.*

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! I am overjoyed, faith, I am, if thou be'st the gentleman——I own I did give my consent to the gentleman I brought here to-day;——but whether this is he I can't be positive.

Ob. P. Canst thou not?——Now, I think thou art a fine fellow to be left guardian to an orphan.

Per. You would have been two rare fellows to have been trusted with the sole management of her fortune; would ye not, think ye? But Mr. Tradelove and myself shall take care of her portion.——

Trade. Ay, ay, so we will—Didn't you tell me the Dutch merchant desired me to meet him here, Mr. Freeman?

Free. I did so; and I am sure he will be here, if you'll have a little patience.

Col. What, is Mr. Tradelove impatient? Nay, then, Ik ben gereet voor you, heb be, Jan Van Timtamtirelereletta Heer Van Fainwell, vergeeten!

Trade. Oh! pox of the name! what, have you trick'd me too, Mr. Freeman?

Col. Trick'd, Mr. Tradelove! did not I give you two thousand pounds for your consent fairly? And, now, do you tell a gentleman he has trick'd you?

Per. So, so; you are a pretty guardian, faith, to sell your charge; what, did you look upon her as part of your stock?

Ob. P. Ha, ha, ha! I am glad thy knavery is found out, however——I confess the maiden overreached me, and I had no sinister end at all.

Per. Ay, ay, one thing or other over-reached you all—but I'll take care he shall never finger a penny of her money, I warrant you;—over-reach'd, quotha! Why, I might have been over-reach'd too, if I had had no more wit: I don't know but this very fellow may be him that was directed to me from Grand Cairo t'other day. Ha, ha, ha!

Col. The very same.

Per. Are you so, sir? but your trick would not pass upon me.——I'm sharp—I'm sharp.

Col. No, as you say, at that time it did not, that was not my lucky hour;—but harkye, sir; I must let you into one secret——you may keep honest John

Tradescant's coat on, for your uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is not dead—so the charge of mourning will be saved, ha, ha, ha!—Don't you remember Mr. Pillage, your uncle's steward? Ha, ha, ha!

Per. Not dead! I begin to fear I am trick'd too.

Col. Don't you remember the signing of a lease, Mr. Periwinkle?

Per. Well, and what signifies that lease, if my uncle is not dead?——Ha! I am sure it was a lease I signed.—

Col. Ay, but it was a lease for life, sir, and of this beautiful tenement, I thank you.

[*Taking hold of* ANN LOVELY.

Per. How durst you put this trick upon me, Mr. Freeman? Didn't you tell me my uncle was dying?

Free. And would tell you twice as much to serve my friend, ha, ha!

Sir P. What, the learned and famous Mr. Periwinkle chous'd too!——Ha, ha, ha!—I shall die with laughing, ha, ha, ha!

Ob. P. It had been well if her father had left her to wiser heads than *thine* and *mine*, friends—Ha, ha, ha!

Trade. Well, since you have outwitted us all, pray you, what and who are you, sir?

Sir P. Sir, the gentleman is a fine gentleman.——I am glad you have got a person, madam, who understands dress and good breeding.——I was resolved she should have a husband of my choosing.

Ob. P. I am sorry the maiden has fallen into such hands.

Trade. A beau! nay, then, she is finely help'd up.

Ann L. Why, beaux are great encouragers of trade, sir—Ha, ha, ha!

Col. Lookye, gentlemen—I am the person who can give the best account of myself, and I must beg Sir Philip's pardon, when I tell him, that I have as much aversion to what he calls dress and breeding,

as I have to the enemies of my religion. I have had the honour to serve his majesty, and headed a regiment of the bravest fellows that ever push'd a bayonet in the throat of a Frenchman; and notwithstanding the fortune this lady brings me, whenever my country wants my aid, this sword and arm are at her service.

Therefore, my dear, if thou'lt but deign to smile,
I meet a recompense for all my toil;
Love and religion ne'er admit restraint,
And force makes *many* sinners, not *one* saint;
Still free as air the active mind does rove,
And searches proper objects for its love;
But that once fix'd, 'tis past the pow'r of art
To chase the dear idea from the heart:
'Tis liberty of choice that sweetens life,
Makes the glad *husband*, and the happy *wife*.

[*Exeunt.*

THE END.

GEORGE BARNWELL

BARNWELL. — TO GAZE UPON YOUR BEAUTY AND PRESS YOUR HAND INFLAMES MY WISHES.

ACT. I. SCENE III.

PAINTED BY STOTHARD. PUBLISHED BY LONGMAN, ETC. ENGRAVED BY [illegible]

GEORGE BARNWELL;

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

By GEORGE LILLO.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRES ROYAL,

DRURY LANE AND COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,

PATERNOSTER ROW.

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REMARKS.

The author of this tragedy was a tradesman, which might influence his taste for the description of scenes in humble life; beyond which, his acquaintance could not extend but in theory.

The popular ballad of "George Barnwell," furnished him with an excellent subject to gratify his inclination, and its moral tendency did just honour to the writer's character, which was that of worth and probity.

Lillo was born in 1693, and was by profession, a jeweller. He lived in London, near Moorgate, in the same neighbourhood where he received his birth: and in the year 1732, having produced this tragedy, he presented it to Mr. Theophilus Cibber, then manager of the summer company at the theatre royal Drury Lane.

Mr. Cibber eagerly accepted this new species of pathetic drama; but, on announcing it for performance, its well-known title, "The true Story of George Barnwell," made a very unfavourable impression upon the refined part of the town, and they

condemned the presumption of the author, in hoping to make them sympathize in the sorrows of any man beneath the rank of an emperor, king, or statesman.

On the first night of representation, the greatest part of the audience assembled to laugh, and brought with them the old ballad on the subject, as a token of ridicule—but, as the play proceeded, they became attentive, then interested, and, at length, threw down the ancient ditty, and drew forth their handkerchiefs.

Pope was amongst the distinguished persons who had the curiosity to be present at the first performance of "George Barnwell," and he commended the work. He observed, that the fable was well conducted, the diction natural; or if, at times, it was elevated something above the simplicity of the characters, it never descended to meanness, or departed from that truth of style calculated to reach the heart.

The play was performed twenty nights successively on its first appearance, nor did it lose its attraction in the winter season, being frequently acted to crowded houses; and warmly patronised by merchants and other opulent citizens.

Revived notions of elegance in calamity, have, in later times, reduced this play to a mere holiday performance, to warn apprentices and servantmen against the arts of depraved females; and point out to them the inevitable destruction that must ensue, upon the first breach of trust.

In spite of so coarse a moral for refined delinquents, "George Barnwell" is an evening's entertainment, worthy of the most judicious admirer of the drama,

when C. Kemble performs the character *. Till he represented it, the tragedy was fallen into absolute contempt, by the appearance of actors in Barnwell, whose persons and ages gave not the slightest resemblance of the bashful youth described; and consequently could excite no mercy towards his crimes, no pity for his sufferings.

The difficulty of representing this tragedy, so as to impress every auditor with its value as a dramatic entertainment, exists in procuring an actor who is young enough to look like the merchant's stripling clerk, and yet performer good enough to paint the tumult of various passions which rend his youthful breast.

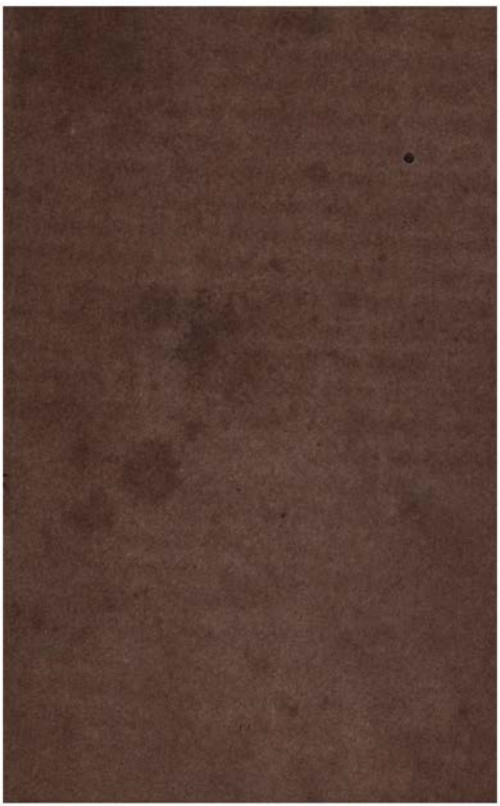
In a criticism upon this play, in the "Biographia Dramatica," it is alleged, that Dr. Samuel Johnson, has given his sentiments upon the question, whether tragedies, in which the plots are taken from domestic life, should be written in metre or prose? wholly against the latter: declaring—"that he could hardly consider a prose tragedy as dramatic."

But it should be recollected, that this opinion was delivered to the writer of a tragedy in prose, (Mr. Edmund Howard, author of "The Female Gamester") who brought his manuscript for the doctor's judgment on the work; and it was a far more gentle method of pronouncing condemnation on the performance,—to point out one great and fatal mistake in the author's general plan, than to torture him by exposing a multitude of faults in every species.

* He appeared in the character when he was not older than Barnwell is described to be.

The author of "George Barnwell," died in September, 1739, in the 47th year of his age. On which occasion, the author of "Tom Jones," printed the following character of him in "The Champion."

"He had a perfect knowledge of human nature, though his contempt of all base means of application, which are the necessary steps to great acquaintance, restrained his conversation within very narrow bounds. He had the spirit of an old Roman, joined to a primitive christian. He was content with his little state of life, in which his excellent temper of mind gave him an happiness beyond the power of riches; and it was necessary for his friends to have a sharp insight into his want of their services, as well as good inclination, and abilities, to serve him. In short, he was one of the best of men, and those who knew him best, will most regret his loss."



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.	COVENT GARDEN.
THOROWGOOD	*Mr. Powell.*	*Mr. Murray.*
UNCLE	*Mr. Eyre.*	*Mr. Hull.*
GEORGE BARNWELL	*Mr. Elliston.*	*Mr. C. Kemble.*
TRUEMAN	*Mr. Bartley.*	*Mr. Claremont.*
BLUNT	*Mr. Cooke.*	*Mr. Beverly.*
JAILER		*Mr. Abbot.*
JOHN		*Mr. Curtis.*
MARIA	*Miss Boyce.*	*Miss Marriot.*
MILLWOOD	*Mrs. Powell.*	*Mrs. Litchfield.*
LUCY	*Mrs. Sparks.*	*Mrs. Mattocks.*

SCENE,—London.

GEORGE BARNWELL.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Room in THOROWGOOD'S *House.*

Enter THOROWGOOD *and* TRUEMAN.

True. Sir, the packet from Genoa is arrived.
[*Gives Letters.*

Thor. Heaven be praised! the storm, that threatened our royal mistress, pure religion, liberty and laws, is for a time diverted. The haughty and revengeful Spaniard, disappointed of the loan on which he depended from Genoa, must now attend the slow returns of wealth from his new world, to supply his empty coffers, ere he can execute his proposed invasion of our happy island. By this means, time is gained to make such preparations on our part, as may, Heaven concurring, prevent his malice, or turn the meditated mischief on himself.

True. He must be insensible indeed, who is not affected when the safety of his country is concerned.—Sir, may I know by what means?—If I am not too bold——

Thor. Your curiosity is laudable, and I gratify it with the greater pleasure, because, from thence you

may learn, how honest merchants, as such, may sometimes contribute to the safety of their country, as they do at all times to its happiness; that if hereafter you should be tempted to any action that has the appearance of vice or meanness in it, upon reflecting on the dignity of our profession, you may, with honest scorn, reject whatever is unworthy of it.

True. Should Barnwell, or I, who have the benefit of your example, by our ill conduct bring any imputation on that honourable name, we must be left without excuse.

Thor. You compliment, young man. [TRUEMAN *bows respectfully.*] Nay, I am not offended. As the name of merchant never degrades the gentleman, so by no means does it exclude him.——But to answer your question: The bank of Genoa had agreed, at an excessive interest, and on good security, to advance the King of Spain a sum of money sufficient to equip his vast Armada; of which our peerless Elizabeth being well informed, sent Walsingham, her wise and faithful secretary, to consult the merchants of this loyal city; who all agreed to direct their several agents to influence, if possible, the Genoese to break their contract with the Spanish court. 'Tis done: the state and bank of Genoa having maturely weighed, and rightly judged of their true interest, prefer the friendship of the merchants of London to that of the monarch, who proudly styles himself King of both Indies.

True. Happy success of prudent counsels! What an expense of blood and treasure is here saved! Sir, have you any commands for me at this time?

Thor. Only look carefully over the files, to see whether there are any tradesmen's bills unpaid; if there are, send and discharge them. We must not let artificers lose their time, so useful to the public and their families, in unnecessary attendance.

[*Exit* TRUEMAN.

Enter MARIA.

Well, Maria, have you given orders for the entertainment? I would have it in some measure worthy the guests. Let there be plenty, and of the best, that the courtiers may at least commend our hospitality.

Mar. Sir, I have endeavoured not to wrong your well-known generosity by an ill-timed parsimony.

Thor. Nay, 'twas a needless caution: I have no cause to doubt your prudence.

Mar. Sir, I find myself unfit for conversation; I should but increase the number of the company, without adding to their satisfaction.

Thor. Nay, my child, this melancholy must not be indulged.

Mar. Company will but increase it: I wish you would dispense with my absence. Solitude best suits my present temper.

Thor. You are not insensible, that it is chiefly on your account these noble lords do me the honour so frequently to grace my board. Should you be absent, the disappointment may make them repent of their condescension, and think their labour lost.

Mar. He, that shall think his time or honour lost in visiting you, can set no real value on your daughter's company, whose only merit is, that she is yours.

Thor. Come, come, Maria, I need not tell you, that a young gentleman may prefer your conversation to mine, and yet intend me no disrespect at all. I remember the time, when the company of the greatest and wisest men in the kingdom would have been insipid and tiresome to me, if it had deprived me of an opportunity of enjoying your mother's.

Mar. Yours, no doubt, was as agreeable to her; for generous minds know no pleasure in society but where 'tis mutual.

Thor. Thou knowest I have no heir, no child, but

thee; the fruits of many years successful industry must all be thine. Now, it would give me pleasure, great as my love, to see on whom you will bestow it. I am daily solicited by men of the greatest rank and merit for leave to address you: but I have hitherto declined it, in hopes that, by observation, I should learn which way your inclination tends; for, as I know love to be essential to happiness in the married state, I had rather my approbation should confirm your choice than direct it.

Mar. What can I say? How shall I answer, as I ought, this tenderness, so uncommon even in the best of parents? But you are without example: yet, had you been less indulgent, I had been most wretched. That I look on the crowd of courtiers that visit here, with equal esteem, but equal indifference, you have observed, and I must needs confess; yet, had you asserted your authority, and insisted on a parent's right to be obeyed, I had submitted, and to my duty sacrificed my peace.

Thor. From your perfect obedience in every other instance, I feared as much; and therefore would leave you without a bias in an affair wherein your happiness is so immediately concerned.

Mar. Whether from a want of that just ambition that would become your daughter, or from some other cause, I know not; but I find high birth and titles don't recommend the man, who owns them, to my affections.

Thor. I would not that they should, unless his merit recommends him more. A noble birth and fortune, though they make not a bad man good, yet they are a real advantage to a worthy one, and place his virtues in the fairest light.

Mar. I cannot answer for my inclinations; but they shall ever be submitted to your wisdom and authority. And as you will not compel me to marry where I cannot love, love shall never make me act

contrary to my duty. Sir, have I your permission to retire?

Thor. I'll see you to your chamber. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in MILLWOOD'S *House.*

MILLWOOD *and* LUCY *discovered.*

Mill. How do I look to-day, Lucy?

Lucy. Oh, killingly, madam! A little more red, and you'll be irresistible.——But why this more than ordinary care of your dress and complexion? What new conquest are you aiming at?

Mill. A conquest would be new indeed.

Lucy. Not to you, who make them every day—but to me——Well, 'tis what I'm never to expect—unfortunate as I am——But your wit and beauty——

Mill. First made me a wretch, and still continue me so. Men, however generous or sincere to one another, are all selfish hypocrites in their affairs with us; we are no otherwise esteemed or regarded by them, but as we contribute to their satisfaction.

Lucy. You are certainly, madam, on the wrong side in this argument. Is not the expense all theirs? And I am sure it is our own fault if we have not our share of the pleasure.

Mill. We are but slaves to men.

Lucy. Nay, 'tis they that are slaves, most certainly, for we lay them under contribution.

Mill. Slaves have no property; no, not even in themselves: all is the victor's.

Lucy. You are strangely arbitrary in your principles, madam.

Mill. I would have my conquest complete, like those of the Spaniards in the New World; who first

plundered the natives of all the wealth they had, and then condemned the wretches to the mines for life, to work for more.

Lucy. Well, I shall never approve of your scheme of government: I should think it much more politic, as well as just, to find my subjects an easier employment.

Mill. It is a general maxim among the knowing part of mankind, that a woman without virtue, like a man without honour or honesty, is capable of any action, though ever so vile: and yet what pains will they not take, what arts not use, to seduce us from our innocence, and make us contemptible and wicked, even in their own opinion! Then is it not just, the villains, to their cost, should find us so? But guilt makes them suspicious, and keeps them on their guard; therefore we can take advantage only of the young and innocent part of the sex, who, having never injured women, apprehend no injury from them.

Lucy. Ay, they must be young indeed.

Mill. Such a one, I think, I have found. As I have passed through the city, I have often observed him receiving and paying considerable sums of money; from thence I conclude he is employed in affairs of consequence.

Lucy. Is he handsome?

Mill. Ay, ay, the stripling is well made, and has a good face.

Lucy. About——

Mill. Eighteen.

Lucy. Innocent, handsome, and about eighteen!—You'll be vastly happy. Why, if you manage well, you may keep him to yourself these two or three years.

Mill. If I manage well, I shall have done with him much sooner. Having long had a design on him, and meeting him yesterday, I made a full stop, and gazing wishfully in his face, asked his name. He blushed, and

bowing very low, answered, George Barnwell. I begged his pardon for the freedom I had taken, and told him, that he was the person I had long wished to see, and to whom I had an affair of importance to communicate, at a proper time and place. He named a tavern; I talked of honour and reputation, and invited him to my house. He swallowed the bait, promised to come, and this is the time I expect him.—[*Knocking at the Door.*] Somebody knocks——D'ye hear—I am at home to nobody to-day but him. [*Exit* LUCY.] Less affairs must give way to those of more consequence, and I am strangely mistaken, if this does not prove of great importance to me, and him too, before I have done with him.—Now, after what manner shall I receive him? Let me consider——I'll e'en trust to nature, who does wonders in these matters.

Enter BARNWELL, *bowing very low.*—LUCY *at a Distance.*

Mill. Sir, the surprise and joy——

Barn. Madam!

Mill. This is such a favour—— [*Advancing.*

Barn. Pardon me, madam.

Mill. So unhoped for! [*Still advances.*—BARNWELL *salutes her, and retires in Confusion.*] To see you here——Excuse the confusion——

Barn. I fear I am too bold——

Mill. Alas, sir, I may justly apprehend you think me so. Please, sir, to sit. I am as much at a loss how to receive this honour as I ought, as I am surprised at your goodness in conferring it.

Barn. I thought you had expected me: I promised to come.

Mill. That is the more surprising: few men are such religious observers of their word.

Barn. All who are honest are.

Mill. To one another; but we simple women are

seldom thought of consequence enough to gain a place in their remembrance.

[*Laying her Hand on his, as by Accident.*

Barn. Her disorder is so great, she don't perceive she has laid her hand on mine. Heavens! How she trembles!—What can this mean? [*Aside.*

Mill. The interest I have in all that relates to you, (the reason of which you shall know hereafter) excites my curiosity; and were I sure you would pardon my presumption, I should desire to know your real sentiments on a very particular subject.

Barn. Madam, you may command my poor thoughts on any subject, I have none that I would conceal.

Mill. You'll think me bold.

Barn. No, indeed.

Mill. What then are your thoughts of love?

Barn. If you mean the love of women, my youth and circumstances make such thoughts improper in me yet. But if you mean the general love we owe to mankind, I think no one has more of it in his temper than myself. I don't know that person in the world, whose happiness I don't wish, and would not promote, were it in my power. In an especial manner I love my uncle, and my master; but above all, my friend.

Mill. You have a friend, then, whom you love?

Barn. As he does me, sincerely.

Mill. He is, no doubt, often blessed with your company and conversation?

Barn. We live in one house, and both serve the same worthy merchant.

Mill. Happy, happy youth! Whoe'er thou art, I envy thee. What have I lost, by being formed a woman! Had I been a man, I might, perhaps, have been as happy in your friendship, as he who now enjoys it is: but as it is——Oh!——

Barn. I never observed woman before; or this is,

sure, the most beautiful of her sex. [*Aside.*] You seem disordered, madam——May I know the cause?

Mill. Do not ask me——I can never speak it, whatever is the cause. I wish for things impossible. I would be a servant, bound to the same master, to live in one house with you.

Barn. How strange, and yet how kind, her words and actions are! And the effect they have on me is as strange. I must be gone, while I have power to go. [*Aside.*] Madam, I humbly take my leave.

Mill. You will not, sure, leave me so soon!

Barn. Indeed I must.

Mill. You cannot be so cruel! I have prepared a poor supper, at which I promised myself your company.

Barn. I am sorry I must refuse the honour you designed me: but my duty to my master calls me hence. I never yet neglected his service. He is so gentle, and so good a master, that, should I wrong him, though he might forgive me, I should never forgive myself.

Mill. Am I refused, by the first man, the second favour I ever stooped to ask? Go then, thou proud hard-hearted youth; but know, you are the only man that could be found, who would let me sue twice for greater favours.

Barn. What shall I do? How shall I go, or stay?

Mill. Yet do not, do not leave me. I with my sex's pride would meet your scorn; but when I look upon you, when I behold those eyes—Oh! spare my tongue, and let my blushes—this flood of tears too, that will force its way, declare—what woman's modesty should hide.

Barn. Oh, Heavens! she loves me, worthless as I am. Her looks, her words, her flowing tears confess it. And can I leave her then? Oh, never, never! Madam, dry up your tears: you shall command me always; I will stay here for ever, if you would have me.

Lucy. So: she has wheedled him out of his virtue of obedience already, and will strip him of all the rest, one after another, till she has left him as few as her ladyship, or myself.

Mill. Now you are kind, indeed: but I mean not to detain you always: I would have you shake off all slavish obedience to your master; but you may serve him still.

Lucy. Serve him still! Ay, or he'll have no opportunity of fingering his cash; and then he'll not serve your end, I'll be sworn. [*Aside.*

Enter BLUNT.

Blunt. Madam, supper's on the table.

Mill. Come, sir, you'll excuse all defects. My thoughts were too much employed on my guest, to observe the entertainment.

[*Exeunt* BARNWELL *and* MILLWOOD.

Blunt. What! is all this preparation, this elegant supper, variety of wines, and music, for the entertainment of that young fellow?

Lucy. So it seems.

Blunt. How! is our mistress turned fool at last? She's in love with him, I suppose.

Lucy. I suppose not. But she designs to make him in love with her, if she can.

Blunt. What will she get by that? He seems under age, and can't be supposed to have much money.

Lucy. But his master has, and that's the same thing, as she'll manage it.

Blunt. I don't like this fooling with a handsome young fellow: while she's endeavouring to ensnare him, she may be caught herself.

Lucy. Nay, were she like me, that would certainly be the consequence; for, I confess, there is something in youth and innocence that moves me mightily.

Blunt. Yes; so does the smoothness and plumpness

of a partridge move a mighty desire in the hawk to be the destruction of it.

Lucy. Why, birds are their prey, and men are ours; though, as you observed, we are sometimes caught ourselves. But that, I dare say, will never be the case of our mistress.

Blunt. I wish it may prove so; for you know we all depend upon her. Should she trifle away her time with a young fellow that there's nothing to be got by, we must all starve.

Lucy. There's no danger of that; for I am sure she has no view in this affair but interest.

Blunt. Well, and what hopes are there of success in that?

Lucy. The most promising that can be. 'Tis true the youth has his scruples; but she'll soon teach him to answer them, by stifling his conscience. Oh, the lad is in a hopeful way, depend upon't. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

BARNWELL *and* MILLWOOD *discovered at Supper.*

Music.—After which they come forward.

Barn. What can I answer? All that I know is, that you are fair, and I am miserable.

Mill. We are both so, and yet the fault is in ourselves.

Barn. To ease our present anguish, by plunging into guilt, is to buy a moment's pleasure with an age of pain.

Mill. I should have thought the joys of love as lasting as they are great: if ours prove otherwise, 'tis your inconstancy must make them so.

Barn. The law of Heaven will not be reversed, and that requires us to govern our passions.

Mill. To give us sense of beauty and desires, and yet forbid us to taste and be happy, is a cruelty to nature. Have we passions only to torment us?

Barn. To hear you talk, though in the cause of vice; to gaze upon your beauty, and press your hand, inflames my wishes; yet, for a moment's guilty pleasure, shall I lose my innocence, my peace of mind, and hopes of solid happiness?

Mill. Chimeras all!

Barn. I would not——yet must on—— [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Room in THOROWGOOD'S *House.*

Enter BARNWELL.

Barn. How strange are all things round me! Like some thief, who treads forbidden ground, and fain would lurk unseen, fearful I enter each apartment of this well-known house. To guilty love, as if that were too little, already have I added breach of trust ——A thief!——Can I know myself that wretched thing, and look my honest friend and injured master in the face? Though hypocrisy may a while conceal my guilt, at length it will be known, and public shame and ruin must ensue. In the mean time, what must be my life? Ever to speak a language foreign to my heart; hourly to add to the number of my crimes, in

order to conceal them! Sure such was the condition of the grand apostate, when first he lost his purity. Like me, disconsolate he wandered; and while yet in heaven, bore all his future hell about.

Enter TRUEMAN.

True. Barnwell, Oh, how I rejoice to see you safe! so will our master and his gentle daughter; who, during your absence, often inquired after you.

Barn. Would he were gone! his officious love will pry into the secrets of my soul. [*Aside.*

True. Unless you knew the pain the whole family has felt on your account, you can't conceive how much you are beloved. But why thus cold and silent? When my heart is full of joy for your return, why do you turn away? why thus avoid me? What have I done? how am I altered since you saw me last? Or rather, what have you done? and why are you thus changed? for I am still the same?

Barn. What have I done indeed! [*Aside.*

True. Not speak!——nor look upon me!——

Barn. By my face he will discover all I would conceal; methinks already I begin to hate him. [*Aside.*

True. I cannot bear this usage from a friend; one whom till now I ever found so loving; whom yet I love; though this unkindness strikes at the root of friendship, and might destroy it in any breast but mine.

Barn. I am not well. [*Turning to him.*] Sleep has been a stranger to these eyes since you beheld them last.

True. Heavy they look indeed, and swoln with tears; now they overflow. Rightly did my sympathising heart forebode last night, when thou wast absent, something fatal to our peace.

Barn. Your friendship engages you too far. My

troubles, whate'er they are, are mine alone: you have no interest in them, nor ought your concern for me give you a moment's pain.

True. You speak as if you knew of friendship nothing but the name. Before I saw your grief, I felt it. Since we parted last, I have slept no more than you; but pensive in my chamber sat alone, and spent the tedious night in wishes for your safety and return: e'en now, though ignorant of the cause, your sorrow wounds me to the heart.

Barn. 'Twill not be always thus. Friendship and all engagements cease as circumstances and occasions vary; and since you once may hate me, perhaps it might be better for us both that now you loved me less.

True. Sure I but dream! Without a cause would Barnwell use me thus? Ungenerous and ungrateful youth, farewell; I shall endeavour to follow your advice. [*Going.*] Yet stay, perhaps, I am too rash, and angry, when the cause demands compassion. Some unforeseen calamity may have befallen him, too great to bear.

Barn. What part am I reduced to act? 'Tis vile and base to move his temper thus, the best of friends and men.

True. I am to blame; pr'ythee, forgive me, Barnwell. Try to compose your ruffled mind; and let me know the cause that thus transports you from yourself; my friendly counsel may restore your peace.

Barn. All, that is possible for man to do for man, your generous friendship may effect; but here even that's in vain.

True. Something dreadful is labouring in your breast; oh, give it vent, and let me share your grief; 'twill ease your pain, should it admit no cure, and make it lighter by the part I bear.

Barn. Vain supposition! my woes increase by being

observed; should the cause be known, they would exceed all bounds.

True. So well I know thy honest heart, guilt cannot harbour there.

Barn. Oh, torture insupportable! [*Aside.*

True. Then why am I excluded? Have I a thought I would conceal from you?

Barn. If still you urge me on this hated subject, I'll never enter more beneath this roof, nor see your face again.

True. 'Tis strange——but I have done; say but you hate me not.

Barn. Hate you! I am not that monster yet.

True. Shall our friendship shall continue?

Barn. It's a blessing I never was worthy of; yet now must stand on terms; and but upon conditions can confirm it.

True. What are they?

Barn. Never hereafter, though you should wonder at my conduct, desire to know more than I am willing to reveal.

True. 'Tis hard; but upon any conditions I must be your friend.

Barn. Then, as much as one lost to himself can be another's I am yours. [*Embracing.*

True. Be ever so, and may Heaven restore your peace! But business requires our attendance; business, the youth's best preservative from ill, as idleness his worst of snares. Will you go with me?

Barn. I'll take a little time to reflect on what has past, and follow you. [*Exit* TRUEMAN.] I might have trusted Trueman, and engaged him to apply to my uncle, to repair the wrong I have done my master: but what of Millwood? shall I leave her, for ever leave her, and not let her know the cause? She, who loves me with such a boundless passion! Can cruelty be duty? I judge of what she then must feel, by what I now endure.

Enter THOROWGOOD.

Thor. Without a cause assigned, or notice given, to absent yourself last night, was a fault, young man, and I came to chide you for it, but hope I am prevented. That modest blush, the confusion so visible in your face, speak grief and shame. When we have offended Heaven, it requires no more; and shall man, who needs himself to be forgiven, be harder to appease? If my pardon or love be of moment to your peace, look up secure of both.

Barn. This goodness has o'ercome me. [*Aside.*] Oh, sir, you know not the nature and extent of my offence; and I should abuse your mistaken bounty to receive it. Though I had rather die than speak my shame; though racks could not have forced the guilty secret from my breast, your kindness has.

Thor. Enough, enough, whate'er it be; this concern shows you're convinced, and I am satisfied. How painful is the sense of guilt, to an ingenuous mind? Some youthful folly, which it were prudent not to inquire into.

Barn. It will be known, and you'll recall your pardon, and abhor me.

Thor. I never will. Yet be upon your guard in this gay thoughtless season of your life; when vice becomes habitual, the very power of leaving it is lost.

Barn. Hear me, on my knees, confess——

Thor. Not a syllable more upon this subject; it were not mercy, but cruelty, to hear what must give you such torment to reveal.

Barn. This generosity amazes and distracts me.

Thor. This remorse makes thee dearer to me than if thou hadst never offended. Whatever is your fault, of this I am certain, 'twas harder for you to offend, than me to pardon. [*Exit* THOROWGOOD.

Barn. Villain, villain, villain! basely to wrong so excellent a man. Should I again return to folly!—

Detested thought!—But what of Millwood then?—Why, I renounce her;—I give her up——The struggle's over, and virtue has prevailed. Reason may convince, but gratitude compels. This unlooked-for generosity has saved me from destruction. [*Going.*

Enter a FOOTMAN.

Foot. Sir, two ladies from your uncle in the country desire to see you.

Barn. Who should they be. [*Aside.*] Tell them I'll wait upon them. [*Exit* FOOTMAN.] Methinks I dread to see them.—Now every thing alarms me.—Guilt, what a coward hast thou made me! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Another Room in THOROWGOOD'S *House.*

Enter MILLWOOD, LUCY, *and a* FOOTMAN.

Foot. Ladies, he'll wait upon you immediately.

Mill. 'Tis very well.——I thank you.

[*Exit* FOOTMAN.

Enter BARNWELL.

Barn. Confusion! Millwood!

Mill. That angry look tells me that here I am an unwelcome guest; I feared as much: the unhappy are so every where.

Barn. Will nothing but my utter ruin content you?

Mill. Unkind and cruel! Lost myself, your happiness is now my only care.

Barn. How did you gain admission?

Mill. Saying we were desired by your uncle to visit, and deliver a message to you, we were received

by the family without suspicion, and with much respect conducted here.

Barn. Why did you come at all?

Mill. I never shall trouble you more. I'm come to take my leave for ever. Such is the malice of my fate: I go hopeless, despairing ever to return. This hour is all I have left: one short hour is all I have to bestow on love and you, for whom I thought the longest life too short.

Barn. Then we are met to part for ever?

Mill. It must be so. Yet think not that time or absence shall ever put a period to my grief, or make me love you less. Though I must leave you, yet condemn me not.

Barn. Condemn you! No, I approve your resolution, and rejoice to hear it; 'Tis just——'tis necessary,——I have well weighed, and found it so.

Lucy. I am afraid the young man has more sense than she thought he had. [*Aside.*

Barn. Before you came, I had determined never to see you more.

Mill. Confusion! [*Aside.*

Lucy. Ay, we are all out; this is a turn so unexpected, that I shall make nothing of my part; they must e'en play the scene betwixt themselves. [*Aside.*

Mill. 'Twas some relief to think, though absent, you would love me still; but to find *you* had resolved to cast me off——This, as I never could expect, I have not learnt to bear.

Barn. I am sorry to hear you blame me in a resolution that so well becomes us both.

Mill. I have reason for what I do, but you have none.

Barn. Can we want a reason for parting, who have so many to wish we never had met?

Mill. Look on me, Barnwell. Am I deformed, or old? Nay, look again; am I not she whom yesterday you thought the fairest and the kindest of her sex?

Barn. No more: let me repent my former fol-

lies, if possible, without remembering what they were.

Mill. Why?

Barn. Such is my frailty, that 'tis dangerous.

Mill. Where is the danger, since we are to part?

Barn. The thought of that already is too painful.

Mill. If it be painful to part, then I may hope, at least, you do not hate me?

Barn. No——no——I never said I did——Oh, my heart!

Mill. Perhaps you pity me?

Barn. I do——I do——Indeed I do.

Mill. You'll think upon me?

Barn. Doubt it not, while I can think at all.

Mill. You may judge an embrace at parting too great a favour—though it would be the last. [*He draws back.*] A look shall then suffice——Farewell—for ever. [*Exeunt* MILLWOOD *and* LUCY.

Barn. If to resolve to suffer, be to conquer,——I have conquered——Painful victory!

Enter MILLWOOD *and* LUCY.

Mill. One thing I had forgot;——I never must return to my own house again. This I thought proper to let you know, lest your mind should change, and you should seek in vain to find me there. Forgive me this second intrusion; I only came to give you this caution, and that, perhaps, was needless.

Barn. I hope it was; yet it is kind, and I must thank you for it.

Mill. My friend, your arm. [*To* LUCY.] Now, I am gone for ever. [*Going.*

Barn. One thing more—Sure there's no danger in my knowing where you go? If you think otherwise——

Mill. Alas! [*Weeping.*

Lucy. We are right, I find; that's my cue. [*Aside.*] Ah, dear sir, she's going she knows not whither; but go she must.

Barn. Humanity obliges me to wish you well: why will you thus expose yourself to needless troubles?

Lucy. Nay, there's no help for it: she must quit town immediately, and the kingdom as soon as possible. It was no small matter, you may be sure, that could make her resolve to leave you.

Mill. No more, my friend; since he, for whose dear sake alone I suffer, and am content to suffer, is kind and pities me; where'er I wander through wilds and deserts, benighted and forlorn, that thought shall give me comfort.

Barn. For my sake!—Oh tell me how, which way am I so curs'd, to bring such ruin on thee?

Mill. No matter; I am contented with my lot.

Barn. How, how am I the cause of your undoing?

Mill. To know it, will but increase your troubles.

Barn. My troubles can't be greater than they are.

Lucy. Well, well, sir, if she won't satisfy you, I will.

Barn. I am bound to you beyond expression.

Mill. Remember, sir, that she desired you not to hear it.

Barn. Begin, and ease my racking expectation.

Lucy. Why, you must know, my lady here was an only child, and her parents dying while she was young, left her and her fortune (no inconsiderable one, I assure you) to the care of a gentleman who has a good estate of his own.

Mill. Ay, ay, the barbarous man is rich enough; but what are riches, when compared to love?

Lucy. For a while he performed the office of a faithful guardian, settled her in a house, hired her servants.——But you have seen in what manner she lived, so I need say no more of that.

Mill. How I shall live hereafter, Heaven knows!

Lucy. All things went on as one could wish; till some time ago, his wife dying, he fell violently in love

with his charge, and would fain have married her. Now the man is neither old or ugly, but a good personable sort of a man, but I don't know how it was, she could never endure him. In short, her ill usage so provoked him, that he brought in an account of his executorship, wherein he makes her debtor to him.——

Mill. A trifle in itself, but more than enough to ruin me, whom, by this unjust account, he had stripped of all before.

Lucy. Now, she having neither money nor friend, except me, who am as unfortunate as herself, he compelled her to pass his accounts, and give bond for the sum he demanded; but still provided handsomely for her, and continued his courtship, till being informed by his spies (truly I suspect some in her own family) that you were entertained at her house, and staid with her all night, he came this morning, raving and storming like a madman, talks no more of marriage (so there's no hope of making up matters that way), but vows her ruin, unless she'll allow him the same favour that he supposes she granted you.

Barn. Must she be ruined, or find her refuge in a another's arms?

Mill. He gave me but an hour to resolve in; that's happily spent with you—— and now I go——

Barn. To be expos'd to all the rigours of the various seasons; the summer's parching heat, and winter's cold? unhoused, to wander friendless, through the unhospitable world, in misery and want; attended with fear and danger, and pursued by malice and revenge. Would'st thou endure all this for me, and can I do nothing, nothing, to prevent it?

Lucy. 'Tis really a pity there can be no way found out.

Barn. Oh, where are all my resolutions now?

Lucy. Now I advised her, sir, to comply with the gentleman.

Barn. Tormenting fiend, away! I had rather perish, nay, see her perish, than have her saved by him. I will myself prevent her ruin, though with my own. A moment's patience: I'll return immediately.

[*Exit* BARNWELL.

Lucy. 'Twas well you came, or, by what I can perceive, you had lost him.

Mill. That, I must confess, was a danger I did not foresee; I was only afraid he should have come without money. You know, a house of entertainment, like mine, is not kept without expense.

Lucy. That's very true; but then you should be reasonable in your demands; 'tis pity to discourage a young man.

Mill. Leave that to me.

Enter BARNWELL, *with a Bag of Money.*

Barn. What am I about to do? Now you, who boast your reason all sufficient, suppose yourselves in my condition, and determine for me; whether 'tis right to let her suffer for my faults, or, by this small addition to my guilt, prevent the ill effects of what is past.

Lucy. These young sinners think every thing in the ways of wickedness so strange!——But I could tell him, that this is nothing but what's very common; for one vice as naturally begets another, as a father a son. But he'll find out that himself, if he lives long enough. [*Aside.*

Barn. Here, take this, and with it purchase your deliverance. Return to your house, and live in peace and safety.

Mill. So, I may hope to see you there again?

Barn. Answer me not, but fly, lest, in the agonies of my remorse, I take again what is not mine to give, and abandon thee to want and misery.

Mill. Say but you'll come.

Barn. You are my fate, my heaven or my hell;

only leave me now, dispose of me hereafter as you please. [*Exeunt* MILLWOOD *and* LUCY.] What have I done? Were my resolutions founded on reason, and sincerely made? Why then has Heaven suffered me to fall? I sought not the occasion; and if my heart deceives me not, compassion and generosity were my motives. But why should I attempt to reason? All is confusion, horror, and remorse. I find I am lost, cast down from all my late-erected hope, and plunged again in guilt, yet scarce know how or why.

Such undistinguish'd horrors make my brain,
Like hell, the seat of darkness and of pain. [*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A Room in THOROWGOOD'S *House.*

THOROWGOOD *and* TRUEMAN *discovered (with Account Books) sitting at a Table.*

Thor. Are Barnwell's accounts ready for my inspection? He does not use to be the last on these occasions.

True. Upon receiving your orders, he retired, I thought in some confusion. If you please, I'll go and hasten him. I hope he has not been guilty of any neglect.

Thor. I'm now going to the Exchange; let him know, at my return I expect to find him ready.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter MARIA, *with a Book.—Sits and reads.*

Mar. How forcible is truth! The weakest mind, inspired with love of that, fixed and collected in itself, with indifference beholds the united force of earth and hell opposing. Such souls are raised above the sense of pain, or so supported that they regard it not. The martyr cheaply purchases his heaven; small are his sufferings, great is his reward. Not so the wretch who combats love with duty; whose mind, weakened and dissolved by the soft passion, feeble and hopeless, opposes his own desires——What is an hour, a day, a year of pain, to a whole life of tortures such as these?

Enter TRUEMAN.

True. Oh, Barnwell! Oh, my friend! how art thou fallen!

Mar. Ha! Barnwell! What of him? Speak, say, what of Barnwell?

True. 'Tis not to be concealed: I've news to tell of him, that will afflict your generous father, yourself, and all who know him.

Mar. Defend us, Heaven!

True. I cannot speak it. See there.

[*Gives a Letter.*

Mar. [Reads.] *I know my absence will surprise my honoured master and yourself; and the more, when you shall understand that the reason of my withdrawing, is my having embezzled part of the cash with which I was entrusted. After this, 'tis needless to inform you, that I intend never to return again. Though this might have been known, by examining my accounts, yet to prevent that unnecessary trouble, and to cut off all fruitless expectations of my return, I have left this from the lost* GEORGE BARNWELL.

True. Lost indeed! Yet how he should be guilty of what he there charges himself withal, raises my wonder equal to my grief. Never had youth a higher sense of virtue. Justly he thought, and as he thought he practised! never was life more regular than his.—An understanding uncommon at his years, an open, generous manliness of temper, his manners easy, unaffected, and engaging.

Mar. This, and much more you might have said with truth. He was the delight of every eye, and joy of every heart that knew him.

True. Since such he was, and was my friend, can I support his loss! See, the fairest, happiest maid this wealthy city boasts, kindly condescends to weep for thy unhappy fate, poor, ruined Barnwell!

Mar. Trueman, do you think a soul so delicate as his, so sensible of shame, can e'er submit to live a slave to vice?

True. Never, never. So well I know him, I'm sure this act of his, so contrary to his nature, must have been caused by some unavoidable necessity.

Mar. Are there no means yet to preserve him?

True. Oh that there were! but few men recover their reputation lost; a merchant never. Nor would he, I fear, though I should find him, ever be brought to look his injured master in the face.

Mar. I fear as much; and therefore would never have my father know it.

True. That's impossible.

Mar. What's the sum?

True. 'Tis considerable; I've marked it here, to show it, with the letter, to your father, at his return.

Mar. If I should supply the money, could you so dispose of that and the account, as to conceal this unhappy mismanagement from my father?

True. Nothing more easy. But can you intend it!—Will you save a helpless wretch from ruin?—Oh,

'twere an act worthy such exalted virtue as Maria's; Sure Heaven, in mercy to my friend, inspired the generous thought.

Mar. Doubt not but I would purchase so great a happiness at a much dearer price. But how shall he be found?

True. Trust to my diligence for that. In the mean time, I'll conceal his absence from your father, or find such excuses for it, that the real cause shall never be suspected.

Mar. In attempting to save from shame, one whom we hope may yet return to virtue, to Heaven and you, the only witnesses of this action, I appeal, whether I do any thing misbecoming my sex and character.

True. Earth must approve the deed, and Heaven, I doubt not, will reward it.

Mar. If Heaven approves it, I am well rewarded. A virgin's fame is sullied by suspicion's lightest breath; and, therefore, as this must be a secret from my father and the world, for Barnwell's sake, for mine, let it be so to him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in MILLWOOD'S *House.*

Enter LUCY *and* BLUNT.

Lucy. Well, what do you think of Millwood's conduct now? Her artifice, in making him rob his master at first, and the various stratagems by which she has obliged him to continue that course, astonish even me, who know her so well. Being called by his master to make up the accounts, he was forced to

quit his house and service, and wisely flies to Millwood for relief and entertainment.

Blunt. How did she receive him?

Lucy. As you would expect. She wondered what he meant, was astonished at his impudence, and, with an air of modesty peculiar to herself, swore so heartily that she never saw him before, that she put me out of countenance.

Blunt. That's much indeed! But how did Barnwell behave?

Lucy. He grieved; and at length, enraged at this barbarous treatment, was preparing to be gone; and making towards the door, showed a sum of money, which he had brought from his master's, the last he is ever likely to have from thence.

Blunt. But then, Millwood——

Lucy. Ay, she, with her usual address, returned to her old arts of lying, swearing, and dissembling; hung on his neck, wept, and swore 'twas meant in jest.—The amorous youth melted into tears, threw the money into her lap, and swore he had rather die than think her false.

Blunt. Strange infatuation!

Lucy. Just then, when every passion with lawless anarchy prevailed, and reason was in the raging tempest lost, the cruel, artful Millwood prevailed upon the wretched youth to promise——what I tremble but to think of.

Blunt. I am amazed! What can it be?

Lucy. You will be more so, to hear, it is to attempt the life of his nearest relation, and best benefactor.

Blunt. His uncle! whom we have often heard him speak of as a gentleman of a large estate, and fair character, in the country where he lives?

Lucy. The same. She was no sooner possessed of the last dear purchase of his ruin; but her avarice, insatiate as the grave, demanded his horrid sacrifice: Barnwell's near relation, his uncle, whose blood must

seal the dreadful secret, and prevent the terrors of her guilty fears.

Blunt. Is it possible she could persuade him to do an act like that?

Lucy. 'Tis true, at the naming of the murder of his uncle, he started into rage; and, breaking from her arms (where she till then had held him with well dissembled love, and false endearments,) called her cruel, monster, devil, and told her she was born for his destruction. She thought it not for her purpose to meet his rage with her rage, but affected a most passionate fit of grief, railed at her fate, and cursed her wayward stars, that still her wants should force her to press him to act such deeds, as she must needs abhor as well as he. She told him necessity had no law, and love no bounds; that therefore he never truly loved, but meant, in her necessity, to forsake her. Then she kneeled, and swore, that since by his refusal he had given her cause to doubt his love, she never would see him more, unless, to prove it true, he robbed his uncle, to supply her wants, and murdered him, to keep it from discovery.

Blunt. I am astonished! there is something so horrid in murder, that all other crimes seem nothing, when compared to that: I would not be involved in the guilt of it for all the world.

Lucy. Nor I, Heaven knows. Therefore let us clear ourselves, by doing all that is in our power to prevent it. I have just thought of a way that to me seems probable. Will you join with me to detect this cursed design?

Blunt. With all my heart. He, who knows of a murder intended to be committed, and does not discover it, in the eye of the law and reason, is a murderer.

Lucy. Let us lose no time; I'll acquaint you with the particulars as we go. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Walk at some Distance from a Country Seat.

Enter BARNWELL.

Barn. A dismal gloom obscures the face of day. Either the sun has slipped behind a cloud, or journeys round the west of heaven with more than common speed, to avoid the sight of what I am doomed to act. Since I set forth on this accurs'd design, where'er I tread methinks, the solid earth trembles beneath my feet. *Murder my uncle!*——my father's only brother, and who since his death has been to me a father; that took me up an infant and an orphan, reared me with tenderest care, and still indulged me with most paternal fondness! Yet here I stand his destined murderer——I stiffen with horror at my own impiety——'Tis yet unperformed——What if I quit my bloody purpose, and fly the place? [*Going, then stops.*]—But whither, oh, whither shall I fly? My master's once friendly doors are for ever shut against me; and without money, Millwood will never see me more; and she has got such firm possession of my heart, and governs there with such despotic sway, that life is not to be endured without her. Ay, there's the cause of all my sin and sorrow: 'tis more than love; it is the fever of the soul, and madness of desire. In vain does nature, reason, conscience, all oppose it; the impetuous passion bears down all before it, and drives me on to lust, to theft, and murder. Oh, conscience, feeble guide to virtue, thou only show'st

us when we go astray, but wantest power to stop us in our course!——Ha! in yonder shady walk I see my uncle——He's alone——Now for my disguise. [*Plucks out a Mask.*]——This is his hour of private meditation. Thus daily he prepares his soul for Heaven; while I——But what have I to do with heaven? Ha! no struggles, conscience——

Hence, hence remorse, and every thought that's good;
The storm, that lust began, must end in blood.

[*Puts on the Mask, draws a Pistol, and exit.*

Enter UNCLE.

Unc. If I were superstitious, I should fear some danger lurked unseen, or death were nigh.——A heavy melancholy clouds my spirits. My imagination is filled with ghastly forms of dreary graves, and bodies changed by death; when the pale lengthened visage attracts each weeping eye, and fills the musing soul at once with grief and horror, pity and aversion. —I will indulge the thought. The wise man prepares himself for death, by making it familiar to his mind. When strong reflections hold the mirror near, and the living in the dead behold their future self, how does each inordinate passion and desire cease, or sicken at the view! The mind scarce moves; the blood, curdling and chilled, creeps slowly through the veins: fixed, still, and motionless we stand, so like the solemn object of our thoughts, we are almost at present what we must be hereafter; till curiosity awakes the soul, and sets it on inquiry.

Enter BARNWELL *at a Distance.*

Oh, death! thou strange mysterious power, seen every day, yet never understood, but by the incom-

municative dead, what art thou? The extensive mind of man, that with a thought circles the earth's vast globe, sinks to the centre, or ascends above the stars; that worlds exotic finds, or thinks it finds, thy thick clouds attempts to pass in vain; lost and bewildered in the horrid gloom, defeated, she returns more doubtful than before, of nothing certain but of labour lost.

[*During this Speech,* BARNWELL *sometimes presents the Pistol, and draws it back again.*

Barn. Oh! 'tis impossible.

[*Throwing down the Pistol.*—UNCLE *starts, and attempts to draw his Sword.*

Unc. A man so near me! armed and masked!

Barn. Nay then, there's no retreat.

[*Plucks a Poignard from his Bosom, and stabs him.*

Unc. All gracious Heaven, regard the prayer of thy dying servant; bless, with the choicest blessings, my dearest nephew; forgive my murderer, and take my fleeting soul to endless mercy.

[BARNWELL *throws off his Mask, runs to him, and kneeling by him, raises and chafes him.*

Barn. Expiring saint! Oh, murdered, martyred uncle! lift up your dying eyes, and view your nephew in your murderer——Oh, do not look so tenderly upon me!——Let indignation lighten from your eyes, and blast me ere you die.——By Heaven, he weeps, in pity of my woes.——Tears, tears, for blood!——The murdered, in the agonies of death, weeps for his murderer.—— Oh, speak your pious purpose; pronounce my pardon then, and take me with you——He would, but cannot——Oh, why, with such fond affection, do you press my murdering hand?— [*Uncle sighs and dies.*]——Life, that hovered on his lips but till he had sealed my pardon, in that sigh expired.—He's gone for ever,——Do I still breathe, and taint with my infectious breath the

wholesome air?——Let Heaven from its high throne, in justice or in mercy, now look down on that dear murdered saint, and me the murderer, and if his vengeance spares, let pity strike and end my wretched being.—Murder, the worst of crimes, and parricide the worst of murders, and this the worst of parricides.——

Oh, may it ever stand alone accurst,
The last of murders, as it is the worst. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

A Room in THOROWGOOD'S *House.*

Enter MARIA, *meeting* TRUEMAN.

Mar. What news of Barnwell?

True. None; I have sought him with the greatest diligence, but all in vain.

Mar. Does my father yet suspect the cause of his absence?

True. All appeared so just and fair to him, it is not possible he ever should; but his absence will no longer be concealed. Your father is wise; and though he seems to hearken to the friendly excuses I would make for Barnwell, yet I am afraid he regards them only as such, without suffering them to influence his judgment.

Enter THOROWGOOD *and* LUCY.

Thor. This woman here has given me a sad, and, 'bating some circumstances, too probable an account of Barnwell's defection.

Lucy. I am sorry, sir, that my frank confession of my former unhappy course of life should cause you to suspect my truth on this occasion.

Thor. It is not that; your confession has in it all the appearance of truth. Among many other particulars, she informs me, that Barnwell has been influenced to break his trust, and wrong me at several times of considerable sums of money. Now, as I know this to be false, I would fain doubt the whole of her relation, too dreadful to be willingly believed.

Mar. Sir, your pardon; I find myself on a sudden so indisposed that I must retire. Poor ruined Barnwell! Wretched, lost Maria! [*Aside.—Exit.*

Thor. Oh, Trueman, this person informs me, that your friend, at the instigation of an impious woman, is gone to rob and murder his venerable uncle.

True. Oh, execrable deed! I am blasted with the horror of the thought.

Lucy. This delay may ruin all.

Thor. What to do or think, I know not. That he ever wronged me, I know is false; the rest may be so too; there's all my hope.

True. Trust not to that: rather suppose all true, than lose a moment's time. Even now the horrid deed may be doing—dreadful imagination!——or it may be done, and we be vainly debating on the means to prevent what is already past.

Thor. This earnestness convinces me, that he knows more than he has yet discovered. What, ho! without there! who waits?

Enter a SERVANT.

Order the groom to saddle the swiftest horse, and prepare to set out with speed; an affair of life and death demands his diligence. [*Exit* SERVANT.] For you, whose behaviour on this occasion I have no time to commend as it deserves, return, and observe this Millwood, till I come. I have your directions. [*Exit* LUCY.] Trueman, you, I am sure, will not be idle on this occasion. [*Exit* THOROWGOOD.

True. He only, who is a friend, can judge of my distress. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

MILLWOOD'S *House.*

Enter MILLWOOD.

Mill. I wish I knew the event of his design. The attempt, without success, would ruin him. Well; what have I to apprehend from that? I fear too much. The mischief being only intended, his friends, through pity of his youth, turn all their rage on me. I should have thought of that before. Suppose the deed done; then, and then only, I shall be secure.—Or what if he returns without attempting it at all!—

Enter BARNWELL, *bloody.*

But he is here, and I have done him wrong. His bloody hands show he has done the deed, but show he wants the prudence to conceal it.

Barn. Where shall I hide me? Whither shall I fly, to avoid the swift unerring hand of justice?

Mill. Dismiss your fears: though thousands had pursued you to the door, yet being entered here, you

are as safe as innocence. I have a cavern, by art so cunningly contrived, that the piercing eyes of jealousy and revenge may search in vain, nor find the entrance to the safe retreat. There will I hide you, if any danger's near.

Barn. Oh, hide me——from myself, if it be possible; for while I bear my conscience in my bosom, though I were hid where man's eye never saw, nor light e'er dawned, 'twere all in vain. For, oh, that innate, that impartial judge, will try, convict, and sentence me for murder, and execute me with never-ending torments. Behold these hands, all crimsoned o'er with my dear uncle's blood. Here's a sight to make a statue start with horror, or turn a living man into a statue!

Mill. Ridiculous! Then it seems you are afraid of your own shadow, or, what's less than a shadow, your conscience.

Barn. Though to man unknown I did the accursed act, what can we hide from Heaven's all-seeing eye?

Mill. No more of this stuff. What advantage have you made of his death? or what advantage may yet be made of it? Did you secure the keys of his treasure, which, no doubt, were about him? What gold, what jewels, or what else of value have you brought me?

Barn. Think you I added sacrilege to murder?—Oh, had you seen him as his life flowed from him in a crimson flood, and heard him praying for me, by the double name of nephew and of murderer—(alas, alas, he knew not then, that his nephew was his murderer!)—how would you have wished, as I did, though you had a thousand years of life to come, to have given them all to have lengthened his one hour! But being dead, I fled the sight of what my hands had done; nor could I, to have gained the empire of the world, have violated, by theft, his sacred corpse.

Mill. Whining, preposterous, canting villain! to

murder your uncle, rob him of life, nature's first, last, dear prerogative, after which there's no injury, then fear to take what he no longer wanted, and bring to me your penury and guilt. Do you think I'll hazard my reputation, nay, my life, to entertain you?

Barn. Oh, Millwood!——this from thee;——But I have done. If you hate me; if you wish me dead, then are you happy; for, oh, 'tis sure my grief will quickly end me.

Mill. In his madness he will discover all, and involve me in his ruin. We are on a precipice from whence there's no retreat for both——Then to preserve myself——[*Pauses.*]——There is no other way. ——'Tis dreadful, but reflection comes too late when danger's pressing, and there's no room for choice. ——It must be done. [*Aside. Rings a Bell.*

Enter a SERVANT.

Fetch me an officer, and seize this villain. He has confessed himself a murderer. Should I let him escape, I might justly be thought as bad as he.

[*Exit* SERVANT.

Barn. Oh, Millwood! sure you do not, you cannot mean it. Stop the messenger; upon my knees, I beg you'd call him back. 'Tis fit I die, indeed, but not by you. I will this instant deliver myself into the hands of justice, indeed I will; for death is all I wish. But thy ingratitude so tears my wounded soul, 'tis worse ten thousand times than death with torture.

Mill. Call it what you will; I am willing to live, and live secure, which nothing but your death can warrant.

Barn. If there be a pitch of wickedness that sets the author beyond the reach of vengeance, you must be secure. But what remains for me but a dismal dungeon, hard galling fetters, an awful trial, and an ignominious death, justly to fall unpitied and ab-

horred: After death to be suspended between heaven and earth, a dreadful spectacle, the warning and horror of a gaping crowd! This I could bear, nay, wish not to avoid, had it but come from any hand but thine.

Enter BLUNT, OFFICER, *and* ATTENDANTS.

Mill. Heaven defend me! Conceal a murderer! Here, sir, take this youth into your custody. I accuse him of murder, and will appear to make good my charge. [*They seize him.*

Barn. To whom, of what, or how shall I complain? I'll not accuse her. The hand of Heaven is in it, and this the punishment of lust and parricide.

Be warn'd, ye youths, who see my sad despair:
Avoid lewd women, false as they are fair.
By reason guided, honest joys pursue:
The fair, to honour and to virtue true,
Just to herself, will ne'er be false to you.
By my example, learn to shun my fate:
(How wretched is the man who's wise too late!)
Ere innocence, and fame, and life be lost,
Here purchase wisdom cheaply, at my cost.
[*Exeunt* BARNWELL, OFFICER, *and* ATTENDANTS.

Mill. Where's Lucy? Why is she absent at such a time?

Blunt. Would I had been so too! Lucy will soon be here; and, I hope, to thy confusion, thou devil!

Mill. Insolent!—This to me?

Blunt. The worst that we know of the devil is, that he first seduces to sin, and then betrays to punishment. [*Exit.*

Mill. They disapprove of my conduct then——My ruin is resolved.——I see my danger, but scorn both

it and them. I was not born to fall by such weak instruments. [*Going.*

Enter THOROWGOOD.

Thor. Where is the scandal of her own sex, and curse of ours?

Mill. What means this insolence? Whom do you seek?

Thor. Millwood.

Mill. Well, you have found her then. I am Millwood.

Thor. Then you are the most impious wretch that e'er the sun beheld.

Mill. From your appearance I should have expected wisdom and moderation, but your manners belie your aspect. What is your business here? I know you not.

Thor. Hereafter you may know me better; I am Barnwell's master.

Mill. Then you are master to a villain, which, I think, is not much to your credit.

Thor. Had he been as much above thy arts, as my credit is superior to thy malice, I need not have blushed to own him.

Mill. My arts! I don't understand you, sir; if he has done amiss, what's that to me? Was he my servant, or yours? you should have taught him better.

Thor. Know, sorceress, I'm not ignorant of any of the arts by which you first deceived the unwary youth. I know how, step by step, you've led him on, reluctant and unwilling, from crime to crime, to this last horrid act, which you contrived, and, by your cursed wiles, even forced him to commit.

Mill. Ha! Lucy has got the advantage, and accused me first. Unless I can turn the accusation, and fix it upon her and Blunt, I am lost. [*Aside.*

Thor. Had I known your cruel design sooner, it

had been prevented. To see you punished, as the law directs, is all that now remains. Poor satisfaction! for he, innocent as he is, compared to you, must suffer too.

Mill. I find, sir, we are both unhappy in our servants. I was surprised at such ill treatment, without cause, from a gentleman of your appearance, and therefore too hastily returned it; for which I ask your pardon. I now perceive you have been so far imposed on, as to think me engaged in a former correspondence with your servant, and some way or other accessary to his undoing.

Thor. I charge you as the cause, the sole cause of all his guilt, and all his suffering, of all he now endures, and must endure, till a violent and shameful death shall put a dreadful period to his life and miseries together.

Mill. Tis very strange. But who's secure from scandal and detraction? So far from contributing to his ruin, I never spoke to him till since this fatal accident, which I lament as much as you. 'Tis true, I have a servant, on whose account he hath of late frequented my house. If she has abused my good opinion of her, am I to blame? Has not Barnwell done the same by you?

Thor. I hear you; pray, go on.

Mill. I have been informed he had a violent passion for her, and she for him: but till now I always thought it innocent. I know her poor, and given to expensive pleasures. Now, who can tell but she may have influenced the amorous youth to commit this murder, to supply her extravagancies?——It must be so. I now recollect a thousand circumstances that confirm it. I'll have her, and a man servant, whom I suspect as an accomplice, secured immediately. I hope, sir, you will lay aside your ill-grounded suspicions of me, and join to punish the real contrivers of this bloody deed. [*Offers to go.*

Thor. Madam, you pass not this way: I see your design, but shall protect them from your malice.

Mill. I hope you will not use your influence, and the credit of your name, to screen such guilty wretches. Consider, sir, the wickedness of persuading a thoughtless youth to such a crime.

Thor. I do——and of betraying him when it was done.

Mill. That, which you call betraying him, may convince you of my innocence. She, who loves him, though she contrived the murder, would never have delivered him into the hands of justice, as I, struck with horror at his crimes, have done.

Thor. Those, whom subtilely you would accuse, you know are your accusers; and, which proves unanswerably their innocence and your guilt, they accused you before the deed was done, and did all that was in their power to prevent it.

Mill. Sir, you are very hard to be convinced; but I have a proof, which, when produced, will silence all objections. [*Exit* MILLWOOD.

Enter LUCY, TRUEMAN, BLUNT, OFFICERS, *&c.*

Lucy. Gentlemen, pray place yourselves, some on one side of that door, and some on the other; watch her entrance, and act as your prudence shall direct you. This way, [*To* THOROWGOOD.] and note her behaviour. I have observed her; she's driven to the last extremity, and is forming some desperate resolution. I guess at her design.

Enter MILLWOOD, *with a Pistol*—TRUEMAN *secures her.*

True. Here thy power of doing mischief ends; deceitful, cruel, woman!

Mill. Fool, hypocrite, villain, man! thou canst not call me that.

True. To call thee woman, were to wrong thy sex, thou devil!

Mill. That imaginary being is an emblem of thy cursed sex collected. A mirror, wherein each particular man may see his own likeness, and that of all mankind.

Thor. Think not, by aggravating the faults of others, to extenuate thy own, of which the abuse of such uncommon perfections of mind and person, is not the least.

Mill. If such I had, well may I curse your barbarous sex, who robbed me of them ere I knew their worth; then left me, too late, to count their value by their loss. Another and another spoiler came, and all my gain was poverty and reproach. My soul disdained, and yet disdains, dependence and contempt. Riches, no matter by what means obtained, I saw secured the worst of men from both. I found it therefore necessary to be rich, and to that end I summoned all my arts. You call them wicked, be it so; they were such as my conversation with your sex had furnished me withal.

Thor. Sure, none but the worst of men conversed with thee.

Mill. Men of all degrees, and all professions, I have known, yet found all were alike wicked to the utmost of their power.—What are your laws, of which you make your boast, but the fool's wisdom, and the coward's valour, the instrument and screen of all your villanies? By them, you punish in others what you act yourselves, or would have acted, had you been in their circumstances. The judge, who condemns the poor man for being a thief, had been a thief himself had he been poor. Thus you go on, deceiving and being deceived, harassing, plaguing, and destroying one another. But women are your universal prey.

Women, by whom you are, the source of joy,
With cruel arts you labour to destroy;
A thousand ways, our ruin you pursue,
Yet blame in us those arts first taught by you.
Oh, may from hence, each violated maid,
By flattering, faithless, barb'rous, man betray'd,
When robb'd of innocence, and virgin fame,
From your destruction, raise a nobler name,
T' avenge their sex's wrongs, devote their mind,
And future Millwoods, prove to plague mankind.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

A Dungeon.—A Table, and a Lamp.

BARNWELL *reading.*

Enter THOROWGOOD.

Thor. There see the bitter fruits of passion's detested reign, and sensual appetite indulged: severe reflections, penitence, and tears.

Barn. My honoured, injured, master, whose goodness has covered me a thousand times with shame, forgive this last unwilling disrespect. Indeed I saw you not.

Thor. 'Tis well; I hope you are better employed, in viewing of yourself. I sent a reverend divine, to

teach you to improve it, and should be glad to hear of his success.

Barn. The word of truth, which he recommended for my constant companion in this my sad retirement, has at length removed the doubts I laboured under. From thence I've learned the infinite extent of heavenly mercy; that my offences, though great, are not unpardonable; and that 'tis not my interest only, but my duty, to believe, and to rejoice in my hope. So shall Heaven receive the glory, and future penitents the profit of my example.

Thor. Proceed. Celestial truths!

Barn. 'Tis wonderful, that words should charm despair, speak peace and pardon to a murderer's conscience; but truth and mercy flow in every sentence, attended with force and energy divine. How shall I describe my present state of mind? I hope in doubt, and trembling I rejoice; I feel my grief increase, even as my fears give way. Joy and gratitude now supply more tears than the horror and anguish of despair before.

Thor. These are the genuine signs of true repentance; the only preparatory, the certain way to everlasting peace.

Barn. What do I owe for all your generous kindness? But, though I cannot, Heaven can and will reward you.

Thor. To see thee thus, is joy too great for words. Farewell.—Heaven strengthen thee:—Farewell.

Barn. Oh, sir, there's something I would say, if my sad swelling heart would give me leave.

Thor. Give it vent a while, and try.

Barn. I had a friend—'tis true I am unworthy—yet methinks your generous example might persuade—— Could not I see him once, before I go from whence there's no return?

Thor. He's coming, and as much thy friend as

ever. This torrent of domestic misery bears too hard upon me. I must retire, to indulge a weakness I find impossible to overcome. [*Aside.*] Much loved—and much lamented youth!—Farewell.—Heaven strengthen thee.———Eternally farewell.

Barn. The best of masters and of men—Farewell! While I live let me not want your prayers.

Thor. Thou shalt not. Thy peace being made with Heaven, death is already vanquished. Bear a little longer the pains that attend this transitory life, and cease from pain for ever. [*Exit* THOROWGOOD.

Barn. I find a power within, that bears my soul above the fears of death, and, spite of conscious shame and guilt, gives me a taste of pleasure more than mortal.

Enter TRUEMAN.

Trueman!——My friend, whom I so wished to see, yet now he's here, I dare not look upon him. [*Weeps.*

True. Oh, Barnwell! Barnwell!

Barn. Mercy! Mercy! gracious Heaven! For death, but not for this, I was prepared.

True. What have I suffered since I saw thee last! What pain has absence given me!—But, oh, to see thee thus!———

Barn. I know it is dreadful! I feel the anguish of thy generous soul—But I was born to murder all who love me! [*Both weep.*

True. I came not to reproach you; I thought to bring you comfort; but I am deceived, for I have none to give. I came to share thy sorrow, but cannot bear my own. Oh, had you trusted me, when first the fair seducer tempted you, all might have been prevented.

Barn. Alas, thou knowest not what a wretch I've been. Breach of friendship was my first and least offence. So far was I lost to goodness, so devoted

to the author of my ruin, that, had she insisted on my murdering thee,——I think——I should have done it.

True. Pr'ythee, aggravate thy faults no more.

Barn. I think I should! Thus good and generous as you are, I should have murdered you!

True. We have not yet embraced, and may be interrupted. Come to my arms.

Barn. Are those honest arms and faithful bosom fit to embrace and to support a murderer? These iron fetters only shall clasp, and flinty pavement bear me; [*Throwing himself on the Ground.*] even these too good for such a bloody monster.

True. Shall fortune sever those whom friendship joined? Thy miseries cannot lay thee so low, but love will find thee. Here will we offer to stern calamity; this place the altar, and ourselves the sacrifice. Our mutual groans shall echo to each other through the dreary vault; our sighs shall number the moments as they pass, and mingling tears communicate such anguish, as words were never made to express.

Barn. Then be it so. [*Rising.*] Since you propose an intercourse of woe, pour all your griefs into my breast, and in exchange take mine. [*Embracing.*] Where's now the anguish that you promised? You've taken mine, and make me no return. Sure peace and comfort dwell within these arms, and sorrow can't approach me while I am here.

Enter KEEPER.

Keep. Sir.

True. I come. [*Exit* KEEPER.

Barn. Must you leave me? Death would soon have parted us for ever.

True. Oh, my Barnwell! there's yet another task behind. Again your heart must bleed for others' woes.

Barn. To meet and part with you I thought was all I had to do on earth. What is there more for me to do or suffer?

True. I dread to tell thee, yet it must be known. Maria——

Barn. Our master's fair and virtuous daughter?

True. The same.

Barn. No misfortune, I hope, has reached that maid! Preserve her, Heaven, from every ill, to show mankind, that goodness is your care!

True. You must remember (for we all observed it) for some time past, a heavy melancholy weighed her down. Disconsolate she seemed, and pined and languished from a cause unknown: till, hearing of your dreadful fate, the long-stifled flame blazed out; and in the transport of her grief discovered her own lost state, while she lamented yours.

Barn. Why did you not let me die, and never know it?

True. It was impossible. She makes no secret of her passion for you: she is determined to see you ere you die, and waits for me to introduce her.

[*Exit* TRUEMAN.

Barn. Vain, busy thoughts, be still! What avails it to think on what I might have been! I now am ——what I've made myself.

Enter TRUEMAN *and* MARIA.

True. Madam, reluctant I lead you to this dismal scene. This is the seat of misery and guilt. Here awful justice reserves her public victims. This is the entrance to a shameful death.

Mar. To this sad place then, no improper guest, the abandoned lost Maria brings despair, and sees the subject and the cause of all this world of woe. Silent and motionless he stands, as if his soul had quitted her abode, and the lifeless form alone was left behind.

Barn. Just Heaven! I am your own; do with me what you please.

Mar. Why are your streaming eyes still fixed below, as though thou'dst give the greedy earth thy sorrows, and rob me of my due? Were happiness within your power, you should bestow it where you pleased: but in your misery I must and will partake.

Barn. Oh, say not so, but fly, abhor, and leave me to my fate! Consider what you are, how vast your fortune, and how bright your fame. Have pity on your youth, your beauty, and unequalled virtue; for which so many noble peers have sighed in vain. Bless with your charms some honourable lord. Adorn with your beauty, and by your example improve, the English court, that justly claims such merit: so shall I quickly be to you—as though I had never been.

Mar. When I forget you, I must be so indeed. Reason, choice, virtue, all forbid it. Let women, like Millwood, if there are more such women, smile in prosperity, and in adversity forsake. Be it the pride of virtue to repair, or to partake, the ruin such have made.

True. Lovely, ill-fated maid!

Mar. Yes, fruitless is my love, and unavailing all my sighs and tears. Can they save thee from approaching death?—from such a death?—Oh sorrow insupportable!

Barn. Preserve her, Heaven, and restore her peace, nor let her death be added to my crimes! [*Bell tolls.*] I am summoned to my fate.

Enter KEEPER.

Keep. Sir, the officers attend you. Millwood is already summoned.

Barn. Tell them, I'm ready. And now, my friend, farewell. [*Embracing.*] Support and comfort, the best you can, this mourning fair.—No more—Forget not to pray for me.]*Turning to* MARIA.] would you,

bright excellence, permit me the honour of a chaste embrace, the last happiness this world could give were mine. [*She inclines towards him, they embrace.*] Exalted goodness! Oh, turn your eyes from earth and me, to heaven, where virtue, like yours, is ever heard! Pray for the peace of my departing soul. Early my race of wickedness began, and soon I reached the summit. Thus justice, in compassion to mankind, cuts off a wretch like me; by one such example, to secure thousands from future ruin.

If any youth, like you, in future times,
Shall mourn my fate, tho' he abhors my crimes;
Or tender maid, like you, my tale shall hear,
And to my sorrows give a pitying tear;
To each such melting eye, and throbbing heart,
Would gracious Heaven this benefit impart;
Never to know my guilt, nor feel my pain,
Then must you own, you ought not to complain,
Since you nor weep, nor shall I die in vain.

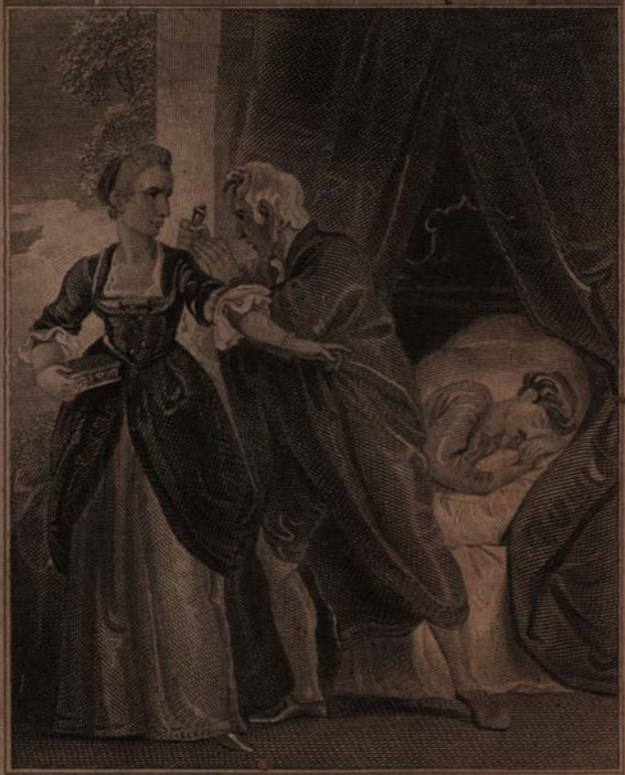
True. In vain,

With bleeding hearts, and weeping eyes, we show,
A humane, gen'rous sense of others' woe;
Unless we mark what drew their ruin on,
And, by avoiding that—prevent our own.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*

THE END.

FATAL CURIOSITY.



AGNES — YOU ARE QUITE DISMAYED.

ACT III. SCENE II.

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1807

FATAL CURIOSITY;

A TRAGEDY,

IN THREE ACTS;

BY GEORGE LILLO.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRES ROYAL,

DRURY LANE AND HAYMARKET.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
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REMARKS.

Preceding a play like this, it would be peculiarly injudicious to say a word which might anticipate that interest, and that admiration, which the reader, of good taste, and strong nerves, must feel in the perusal.

Dialogue, character, fable, incident, all combine to render this little three act drama one of the most powerful, at the same time the most instructive, the stage has to boast—yet, for want of that robust constitution just alluded to, which implies strength of mind as well as body, an audience shrink from beholding it performed; and even certain tremulous readers should be forewarned, not to proceed so far as the catastrophe.

The author of this tragedy was a man of a very singular imagination, for all his plays are of a species almost wholly distinct from those of every other dramatic writer. "George Barnwell," as well as "Fatal Curiosity," is a proof of the particularity of Lillo's muse; and, to be original both in design and execution, is surely one of the highest encomiums that an artist can deserve.

The affecting tragedy of "George Barnwell" has more admirers than it is the fashion to acknowledge: yet it gives not even an intimation, that the same dramatist could ever arrive to that degree of perfection in his art, as to produce "Fatal Curiosity."

From the first scene of this tragedy to the last, all is interesting, all is natural—occurrences, as in real life, give rise to passions; passion inspires new thoughts, elevates each sentiment, embellishes the language, and renders every page of the production either sweetly pathetic, or horribly sublime.

Yet the highest merit of any is the moral, which the work contains. The unfortunate should read it, and be taught patience—the fortunate, and learn gratitude to Divine Providence.

There is even instruction to be gained by a very inferior event in the play—deception, for whatever innocent purpose used, is shown to be of most fatal tendency.

Though every character partakes of the general interest which the story excites, yet Old Wilmot and his wife are pre-eminent in all they utter, even before they are provoked to act. It may be, their conversation has greater force, and appears to have more of nature, because the dissatisfied and complainer, though seldom made an object of interest by an author, is a being far more familiar to every observer, and by far more pitiable, than the resigned and the patient.

"Fatal Curiosity" was first performed in the year 1736, and received most favourably—it then was with-

drawn from the stage till about the year 1782, when Colman the elder revived it at his theatre during the summer.

Mr. Colman was a warm admirer of Lillo's works, and of this play in particular. He caused it to be rehearsed with infinite care; and, from the reception of the two first acts, and part of the third, he had the hope that it would become extremely popular—but, on the performance of a scene which followed soon after, a certain horror seized the audience, and was manifested by a kind of stifled scream.

After having shuddered at this tragedy, even as a fiction, it is dreadful to be told,—that the most horrid event which here takes place, is merely the representation of a fact which occurred at a village on the western coast of England.

That the direful circumstance thus brought upon the stage might probably occur, is the great hold which it has upon the heart;—had probability been violated, that powerful force would have failed—but Lillo is an author whose characters are such as inhabit the world, and do not reside merely in romances.

Fielding, another copyist of nature, says of the play, in his prologue:—

" No fustian hero rages here to-night;
" No armies fall, to fix a tyrant's right:
" From lower life we draw our scene's distress:—
" Let not your equals move your pity less."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.	HAYMARKET.
OLD WILMOT	*Mr. Kemble.*	*Mr. Bensley.*
YOUNG WILMOT	*Mr. Barrymore.*	*Mr. Palmer.*
EUSTACE	*Mr. Truman.*	*Mr. R. Palmer.*
RANDAL	*Mr. C. Kemble.*	*Mr. Bannister, jun.*
AGNES	*Mrs. Siddons.*	*Miss Sherry.*
CHARLOTTE	*Mrs. Powell.*	*Mrs. Bulkeley.*
MARIA	*Miss Leake.*	*Miss Hooke.*

SCENE—Penryn, in Cornwall.

FATAL CURIOSITY.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

WILMOT'S *House*.

OLD WILMOT *alone*.

O. Wilm. The day is far advanc'd. The cheerful sun
Pursues with vigour his repeated course:
No labour lessens, nor no time decays
His strength, or splendour: evermore the same,
From age to age his influence sustains
Dependent worlds, bestows both life and motion
On the dull mass, that forms their dusky orbs,
Cheers them with heat, and gilds them with his brightness.
Yet man, of jarring elements compos'd,
Who posts from change to change, from the first hour
Of his frail being to his dissolution,
Enjoys the sad prerogative above him,
To think, and to be wretched! What is life
To him, that's born to die!——
Or, what the wisdom, whose perfection ends
In knowing, we know nothing?——
Mere contradiction all! A tragic farce,

Tedious, though short, elab'rate without art,
Ridiculously sad——

Enter RANDAL.

Where hast been, Randal?

Rand. Not out of Penryn, sir; but to the strand,
To hear what news from Falmouth, since the storm
Of wind last night.

O. Wilm. It was a dreadful one.

Rand. Some found it so. A noble ship from India
Ent'ring the harbour, run upon a rock,
And there was lost.

O. Wilm. What 'came of those on board her?

Rand. Some few are sav'd, but much the greater part,
'Tis thought, are perish'd.

O. Wilm. They are past the fear
Of future tempests, or a wreck on shore:
Those who escap'd, are still expos'd to both.
Where's your mistress?

Rand. I saw her pass the High-street, t'wards the Minster.

O. Wilm. She's gone to visit Charlotte. She doth well.
In the soft bosom of that gentle maid,
There dwells more goodness than the rigid race
Of moral pedants e'er believ'd, or taught.
With what amazing constancy and truth,
Doth she sustain the absence of our son,
Whom more than life she loves! How shun for him,
Whom we shall ne'er see more, the rich and great;
Who own her charms, and sigh to make her happy!
Since our misfortunes we have found no friend,
None who regarded our distress, but her;
And she, by what I have observ'd of late,
Is wearied, or exhausted. Curs'd condition!
To live a burden to one only friend,
And blast her youth with our contagious woe!

Who, that had reason, soul, or sense, would bear it
A moment longer? Then this honest wretch!—
I must dismiss him—Why should I detain
A grateful, gen'rous, youth, to perish with me?
His service may procure him bread elsewhere,
Though I have none to give him.—Pr'ythee, Randal,
How long hast thou been with me?

Rand. Fifteen years.
I was a very child when first ye took me
To wait upon your son, my dear young master.
I oft have wish'd I'd gone to India with him,
Though you, desponding, give him o'er for lost.

[OLD WILMOT *wipes his Eyes.*

I am to blame: this talk revives your sorrow
For his long absence.

O. Wilm. That cannot be reviv'd,
Which never died.

Rand. The whole of my intent
Was to confess your bounty, that supplied
The loss of both my parents: I was long
The object of your charitable care.

O. Wilm. No more of that: Thou'st serv'd me longer since
Without reward; so that account is balanced,
Or, rather, I'm thy debtor. I remember,
When Poverty began to show her face
Within these walls, and all my other servants,
Like pamper'd vermin from a falling house,
Retreated with the plunder they had gain'd,
And left me, too indulgent and remiss
For such ungrateful wretches, to be crush'd
Beneath the ruin they had help'd to make,
That you, more good than wise, refus'd to leave me.

Rand. Nay, I beseech you, sir!—

O. Wilm. With my distress
In perfect contradiction to the world,
Thy love, respect, and diligence, increas'd.
Now, all the recompence within my power,

Is to discharge thee, Randal, from my hard,
Unprofitable service.
Rand. 'Heaven forbid!
Shall I forsake you in your worst necessity?
Believe me, sir, my honest soul abhors
The barb'rous thought!
O. Wilm. What! canst thou feed on air?
I have not left wherewith to purchase food
For one meal more!
Rand. Rather than leave you thus,
I'll beg my bread, and live on others' bounty,
While I serve you.
O. Wilm. Down, down, my swelling heart,
Or burst in silence! 'Tis thy cruel fate
Insults thee by his kindness—He is innocent
Of all the pain it gives thee.—Go thy ways:
I will no more suppress thy youthful hopes
Of rising in the world.
Rand. 'Tis true, I'm young,
And never try'd my fortune, or my genius,
Which may, perhaps, find out some happy means,
As yet unthought of, to supply your wants.
O. Wilm. Thou tortur'st me: I hate all obligations
Which I can ne'er return: And who art thou,
That I should stoop to take 'em from thy hand?
Care for thyself, but take no thought for me!
I will not want thee—trouble me no more.
Rand. Be not offended, sir, and I will go.
I ne'er repin'd at your commands before;
But Heaven's my witness, I obey you now,
With strong reluctance, and a heavy heart!
Farewell, my worthy master! [*Going.*
O. Wilm. Farewell!—Stay;
As thou art yet a stranger to the world,
Of which, alas, I've had too much experience!
I should, methinks, before we part, bestow
A little counsel on thee.—Dry thy eyes:
If thou weep'st thus, I shall proceed no farther.
Dost thou aspire to greatness, or to wealth?

Quit books, and the unprofitable search
Of wisdom there, and study humankind:
No science will avail thee without that;
But that obtain'd, thou need'st not any other.
This will instruct thee to conceal thy views,
And wear the face of probity and honour,
Till thou hast gain'd thy end: which must be ever
Thy own advantage, at that man's expense
Who shall be weak enough to think thee honest.

Rand. You mock me, sure!

O. Wilm. I never was more serious.

Rand. Why should you counsel, what you scorn'd to practise?

O. Wilm. Because that foolish scorn has been my ruin.
I've been an idiot, but would have thee wiser,
And treat mankind, as they would treat thee, Randal,
As they deserve, and I've been treated by them:
Thou'st seen by me, and those who now despise me,
How men of fortune fall, and beggars rise;
Shun my example; treasure up my precepts;
The world's before thee—be a knave, and prosper.
What, art thou dumb? [*After a long Pause.*

Rand. Amazement ties my tongue.
Where are your former principles?

O. Wilm. No matter;
Suppose I have renounc'd them: I have passions,
And love thee still; therefore would have thee think,
The world is all a scene of deep deceit,
And he, who deals with mankind on the square,
Is his own bubble, and undoes himself.
Farewell, and mark my counsel, boy. [*Exit.*

Rand. Amazement!
Is this the man I thought so wise and just?
What, teach and counsel me to be a villain!
Sure grief has made him frantic, or some fiend
Assum'd his shape: I shall suspect my senses.
High minded he was ever, and improvident,

But pitiful, and generous, to a fault.
Pleasure he lov'd, but honour was his idol.
O fatal change! O horrid transformation!
So a majestic temple, sunk to ruin,
Becomes the loathsome shelter and abode
Of lurking serpents, toads, and beasts of prey;
And scaly dragons hiss, and lions roar,
Where wisdom taught, and music charm'd before.
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

CHARLOTTE'S *House.*

Enter CHARLOTTE *and* MARIA.

Char. What terror and amazement must they feel,
Who die by shipwreck!
Mar. 'Tis a dreadful thought!
Char. Ay; is it not, Maria?—To descend,
Living, and conscious, to the wat'ry tomb!
Alas! had we no sorrows of our own,
The frequent instances of others' woe,
Must give a gen'rous mind a world of pain.
But you forget you promis'd me to sing.
Though cheerfulness and I have long been strangers,
Harmonious sounds are still delightful to me.
There's sure no passion in the human soul,
But finds its food in music. I would hear
The song, compos'd by that unhappy maid,
Whose faithful lover 'scap'd a thousand perils
From rocks and sands, and the devouring deep;
And after all, being arriv'd at home,
Passing a narrow brook, was drowned there,
And perish'd in her sight.

SONG—MARIA.

Cease, cease, heart-easing tears!
Adieu, you flatt'ring fears,
Which seven long tedious years
Taught me to bear.
Tears are for lighter woes;
Fear no such danger knows,
As fate remorseless shows,
Endless despair
Dear cause of all my pain,
On the wide stormy main,
Thou wast preserv'd in vain,
Though still ador'd.
Hadst thou dy'd there unseen,
My wounded eyes had been
Sav'd from the direst scene
Maid e'er deplor'd.

[CHARLOTTE *finds a Letter.*

Char. What's this?—A letter superscrib'd to me!
None could convey it here, but you, Maria.
Ungen'rous, cruel maid! to use me thus!
To join with flatt'ring men, to break my peace,
And persecute me to the last retreat!

Mar. Why should it break your peace, to hear the sighs
Of honourable love? This letter is——

Char. No matter whence: return it back unopen'd:
I have no love no charms, but for my Wilmot,
Nor would have any.

Mar. Alas! Wilmot's dead;
Or, living, dead to you.

Char. I'll not despair: Patience shall cherish hope;
Nor wrong his honour by unjust suspicion.
I know his truth, and will preserve my own.

But, to prevent all future importunity,
Know, thou incessant foe to my repose,
Whether he sleeps secure from mortal cares,
In the deep bosom of the boist'rous main,
Or, toss'd with tempest, still endures its rage;
No second choice shall violate my vows;
High Heaven, which heard them, and abhors the perjur'd,
Can witness, they were made without reserve
Never to be retracted, ne'er dissolv'd
By accident or absence, time or death.

Mar. And did your vows oblige you to support
His haughty parents, to your utter ruin?—
Well may you weep, to think on what you've done.

Char. I weep to think that I can do no more
For their support. What will become of them?—
The hoary, helpless, miserable pair!

Mar. What I can't praise, you force me to admire,
And mourn for you, as you lament for them.
Your patience, constancy, and resignation,
Merit a better fate.

Char. So pride would tell me,
And vain self-love, but I believe them not:
And if by wanting pleasure, I have gain'd
Humility, I'm richer for my loss.

Mar. You have the heavenly art still to improve
Your mind by all events—But here comes one,
Whose pride seems to increase with her misfortunes.
Her faded dress, unfashionably fine,
As ill conceals her poverty, as that
Strain'd complaisance, her haughty, swelling heart.
Though perishing with want, so far from asking,
She ne'er receives a favour uncompell'd,
And, while she ruins, scorns to be oblig'd:
Let me depart, I know she loves me not.

[*Exit* MARIA.

Enter AGNES.

Char. This visit's kind.

Agnes. Few else would think it so:
Those, who would once have thought themselves much honour'd
By the least favour, though 'twere but a look,
I could have shown them, now refuse to see me.
'Tis misery enough to be reduc'd
To the low level of the common herd,
Who, born to beggary, envy all above them:
But 'tis the curse of curses, to endure
The insolent contempt of those we scorn.

Char. By scorning, we provoke them to contempt,
And thus offend, and suffer in our turns:
We must have patience.

Agnes. No, I scorn them yet;
But there's no end of suff'ring: Who can say
Their sorrows are complete? My wretched husband,
Tir'd with our woes, and hopeless of relief,
Grows sick of life.
And, urg'd by indignation and despair,
Would plunge into eternity at once,
By foul self murder.

Char. Gracious Heaven support him!

Agnes. His fixed love for me,
Whom he would fain persuade to share his fate,
And take the same uncertain, dreadful course,
Alone withholds his hand.

Char. And may it ever!

Agnes. I've known with him, the two extremes of life,
The highest happiness, and deepest woe,
With all the sharp and bitter aggravations
Of such a vast transition—Such a fall
In the decline of life!—I have as quick,

As exquisite a sense of pain, as he,
And would do any thing, but die, to end it;
But there my courage fails. Death is the worst
That fate can bring, and cuts off ev'ry hope.
Char. We must not chuse, but strive to bear our lot
Without reproach, or guilt. By one rash act
Of desperation, we may overthrow
The merit we've been raising all our days,
And lose our whole reward. And now, methinks,
Now, more than ever, we have cause to fear,
And be upon our guard. The hand of Heaven
Spreads clouds on clouds o'er our benighted heads,
And, wrapp'd in darkness, doubles our distress.
I had, the night last past, repeated twice,
A strange and awful dream: I would not yield
To fearful superstition, nor despise
The admonition of a friendly power,
That wish'd my good.
Agnes. I have certain plagues enough,
Without the help of dreams, to make me wretched.
Char. I would not stake my happiness or duty,
On their uncertain credit, nor on aught
But reason, and the known decrees of Heaven.
Yet dreams have sometimes shown events to come,
And may excite to vigilance and care.
My vision may be such, and sent to warn us,
(Now we are tried by multiply'd afflictions)
To mark each motion of our swelling hearts,
Lest we attempt to extricate ourselves,
And seek deliv'rance by forbidden ways—
To keep our hopes and innocence entire,
Till we're dismiss'd to join the happy dead,
Or Heaven relieves us here.
Agnes. Well, to your dream.
Char. Methought, I sat, in a dark winter's night,
On the wide summit of a barren mountain;

The sharp, bleak winds, pierc'd through my shiv'ring frame,
And storms of hail, and sleet, and driving rains,
Beat with impetuous fury on my head,
Drench'd my chill'd limbs, and pour'd a deluge round me.
On one hand, ever-gentle Patience sat,
On whose calm bosom I reclin'd my head;
And on the other, silent Contemplation.
At length, to my unclos'd, and watchful eyes,
That long had roll'd in darkness, dawn appear'd;
And I beheld a man, an utter stranger,
But of graceful and exalted mien,
Who press'd with eager transport to embrace me.
I shunn'd his arms: But at some words he spoke,
Which I have now forgot, I turn'd again;
But he was gone—And oh, transporting sight!
Your son, my dearest Wilmot, fill'd his place!

Agnes. If I regarded dreams, I should expect
Some fair event from yours.

Char. But what's to come,
Though more obscure, is terrible indeed.
Methought we parted soon, and when I sought him,
You and his father—(Yes, you both were there)
Strove to conceal him from me. I pursu'd you
Both with my cries, and call'd on Heaven and earth
To judge my wrongs, and force you to reveal
Where you had hid my love, my life, my Wilmot!

Agnes. Unless you mean t'offend me, spare the rest.
'Tis just as likely Wilmot should return,
As we become your foes.

Char. Far be such thought
From Charlotte's breast: But when I heard you name
Self murder, it reviv'd the frightful image
Of such a dreadful scene!

Agnes. You will persist!——

Char. Excuse me: I have done. Being a dream,
I thought, at least, it could not give offence.
Agnes. You could not think so, had you thought at all.
But I take nothing ill from thee.—Adieu!
I've tarried longer than I first intended,
And my poor husband mourns the while, alone.
[*Exit* AGNES.
Char. She's gone abruptly, and, I fear, displeas'd.
The least appearance of advice or caution,
Sets her impatient temper in a flame.
When grief, that well might humble, swells our pride,
And pride, increasing, aggravates our grief,
The tempest must prevail till we are lost.
Heaven grant a fairer issue to her sorrows! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Town and Port of Penryn.

Enter YOUNG WILMOT *and* EUSTACE, *in Indian Habits.*

Y. Wilm. Welcome, my friend, to Penryn! Here we're safe.
Eust. Then we're deliver'd twice: first from the sea,
And then from men, who, more remorseless, prey
On shipwreck'd wretches, and who spoil, and murder
Those, whom fell tempests, and devouring waves,
In all their fury, spar'd.

Y. Wilm. It is a scandal,
(Though malice must acquit the better sort),
The rude, unpolish'd people here, in Cornwall,
Have long lain under, and with too much justice:
For 'tis an evil, grown almost inveterate,
And asks a bold and skilful hand to cure.

Eust. Your treasure's safe, I hope.

Y. Wilm. 'Tis here, thank Heaven!
Being in jewels, when I saw our danger,
I hid it in my bosom.

Eust. I observed you,
And wonder how you could command your thoughts,
In such a time of terror and confusion.

Y. Wilm. My thoughts were then at home. O England! England!
Thou seat of plenty, liberty, and health,
With transport I behold thy verdant fields,
Thy lofty mountains rich with useful ore,
Thy num'rous herds, thy flocks, and winding streams.
After a long and tedious absence, Eustace,
With what delight we breathe our native air,
And tread the genial soil that bore us first!
'Tis said, the world is ev'ry wise man's country;
Yet, after having view'd its various nations,
I'm weak enough, still to prefer my own,
To all I've seen beside—You smile, my friend!
And think, perhaps, 'tis instinct, more than reason.
Why, be it so: Instinct preceded reason
Ev'n in the wisest men, and may sometimes
Be much the better guide. But, be it either,
I must confess, that even death itself
Appear'd to me with twice its native horrors,
When apprehended in a foreign land.
Death is, no doubt, in ev'ry place the same;
Yet nature casts a look towards home, and most,
Who have it in their power, chuse to expire
Where they first drew their breath.

Eust. Believe me, Wilmot,
Your grave reflections were not what I smil'd at;
I own the truth. That we're return'd to England,
Affords me all the pleasure you can feel.
Yet I must think a warmer passion moves you;
Thinking of that, I smil'd.
Y. Wilm. O Eustace! Eustace!
Thou know'st, for I've confess'd to thee, I love;
But having never seen the charming maid,
Thou canst not know the fierceness of my flame.
My hopes and fears, like the tempestuous seas
That we have pass'd, now mount me to the skies,
Now hurl me down from that stupendous height.
And drive me to the centre. Did you know
How much depends on this important hour,
You would not be surpris'd to see me thus.
The sinking fortune of our ancient house,
Compell'd me, young, to leave my native country,
My weeping parents, and my lovely Charlotte,
Who rul'd, and must for ever rule, my fate.
O, should my Charlotte, doubtful of my truth,
Or in despair ever to see me more,
Have given herself to some more happy lover!—
Distraction's in the thought!—Or, should my parents,
Griev'd for my absence, and oppress'd with want,
Have sunk beneath their burden, and expir'd,
While I, too late, was flying to relieve them;
The end of all my long and weary travels,
The hope that made success itself a blessing,
Being defeated, and for ever lost;
What were the riches of the world to me?
Eust. The wretch who fears all that is possible,
Must suffer more than he, who feels the worst
A man can feel, yet lives exempt from fear.
A woman may be false, and friends are mortal;
And yet your aged parents may be living,
And your fair mistress constant.

Y. Wilm. True, they may;
I doubt, but I despair not. No, my friend!
My hopes are strong, and lively as my fears;
They tell me, Charlotte is as true as fair;
That we shall meet, never to part again;
That I shall see my parents, kiss the tears
From their pale hollow cheeks, cheer their sad hearts,
And drive that gaping phantom, meagre want,
For ever from their board; their days to come
Crown all with peace, with pleasure, and abundance;
Receive their fond embraces and their blessings,
And be a blessing to them.
Eust. 'Tis our weakness:
Blind to events, we reason in the dark,
And fondly apprehend, what none e'er found
Or ever shall, pleasure and pain unmix'd;
And flatter, and torment ourselves by turns,
With what shall never be.
Y. Wilm. I'll go this instant
To seek my Charlotte, and explore my fate.
Eust. What, in that foreign habit?
Y. Wilm. That's a trifle,
Not worth my thoughts.
Eust. The hardships you've endur'd,
And your long stay beneath the burning zone,
Where one eternal sultry summer reigns,
Have marr'd the native hue of your complexion:
Methinks you look more like a sun-burnt Indian,
Than a Briton.
Y. Wilm. Well; 'tis no matter, Eustace!
I hope my mind's not alter'd for the worse,
And for my outside—But inform me, friend,
When I may hope to see you.
Eust. When you please:
You'll find me at the inn.

Y. Wilm. When I have learn'd my doom, expect me there.
Till then, farewell!
Eust. Farewell! Success attend you!
[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

CHARLOTTE'S *House.*

Enter CHARLOTTE, *thoughtful; and soon after,* SERVANT, *from the other Side.*

Serv. Madam, a stranger, in a foreign habit, desires to see you.
Char. In a foreign habit! —
'Tis strange, and unexpected. But admit him.
[*Exit* SERVANT.
Who can this stranger be? I know no foreigner—

Enter YOUNG WILMOT.

Nor any man like this.
Y. Wilm. Ten thousand joys!
[*Going to embrace her.*
Char. Sir, you are too bold—Forbear, and let me know
What business brought you here, or leave the place.

Y. Wilm. Perfidious maid!—Am I forgot, or scorn'd?

Char. Can I forget a man I never knew?

Y. Wilm. My fears are true; some other has her heart:
She's lost: My fatal absence has undone me! [*Aside.*
O! could thy Wilmot have forgot thee, Charlotte!

Char. Ha! Wilmot! say, what do your words import?
O, gentle stranger, ease my swelling heart!
What dost thou know of Wilmot?

Y. Wilm. This I know:—
When all the winds of Heaven seem'd to conspire
Against the stormy main, and dreadful peals
Of rattling thunder deafen'd ev'ry ear,
And drown'd th' affrighten'd mariners' loud cries;
When livid lightning spread its sulphurous flames
Through all the dark horizon, and disclos'd
The raging seas incens'd to his destruction;
When the good ship, in which he was embark'd,
Broke, and o'erwhelm'd by the impetuous surge,
Sunk to the oozy bottom of the deep,
And left him struggling with the warring waves:
In that dread moment, in the jaws of death,
When his strength fail'd, and ev'ry hope forsook him,
And his last breath press'd towards his trembling lips,
The neighbouring rocks, that echo'd to his moan,
Return'd no sound articulate but—Charlotte.

Char. The fatal tempest, whose description strikes
The hearer with astonishment, is ceas'd;
And Wilmot is at rest. The fiercer storm
Of swelling passions, that o'erwhelms the soul,
And rages worse than the mad foaming seas
In which he perish'd, ne'er shall vex him more.

Y. Wilm. Thou seem'st to think he's dead; enjoy that thought;
Persuade yourself, that what you wish is true,
And triumph in your falsehood. Yes, he's dead,

You were his fate. The cruel winds and waves,
That cast him pale and breathless on the shore,
Spar'd him for greater woes—to know his Charlotte,
Forgetting all her vows to him and Heaven,
Had cast him from her thoughts.—Then, then he died;
But never can have rest. Ev'n now he wanders,
A sad, repining, discontented ghost—
The unsubstantial shadow of himself;
And pours his plaintive groans in thy deaf ears,
And stalks, unseen, before thee.

Char. 'Tis enough:
Detested falsehood now has done its worst.
And art thou dead? And wou'dst thou die, my Wilmot!
For one thou thought'st unjust? Thou soul of truth!
What must be done? Which way shall I express
Unutterable woe? Or how convince
Thy dear departed spirit, of the love,
Th' eternal love, and never-failing faith
Of thy much injur'd, lost, despairing Charlotte?

Y. Wilm. Be still, my flutt'ring heart; hope not too soon!
Perhaps I dream, and this is all illusion. [*Aside.*

Char. If, as some teach, the spirit after death,
Free from the bounds and ties of sordid earth,
Can trace us to our most conceal'd retreat,
See all we act, and read our very thoughts;
To thee, O Wilmot! kneeling, I appeal,—
If e'er I swery'd in action, word, or thought,
Or ever wish'd to taste a joy on earth
That center'd not in thee, since last we parted—
May we ne'er meet again; but thy loud wrongs
So close the ear of mercy to my cries,
That I may never see those bright abodes
Where truth and virtue only have admission,
And thou inhabit'st now!

Y. Wilm. Assist me, Heaven!

Preserve my reason, memory, and sense!
O moderate my fierce tumultuous joys,
Or their excess will drive me to distraction.
O, Charlotte! Charlotte! lovely, virtuous maid!
Can thy firm mind, in spite of time and absence,
Remain unshaken, and support its truth;
And yet thy frailer memory retain
No image, no idea of thy lover?
Why dost thou gaze so wildly? Look on me;
Turn thy dear eyes this way; observe me well.
Have scorching climates, time, and this strange habit,
So chang'd and so disguis'd thy faithful Wilmot,
That nothing in my voice, my face, or mien,
Remains to tell my Charlotte I am he?

[*After viewing him some Time, she approaches weeping, and gives him her Hand; and then, turning towards him, sinks upon his Bosom.*

Why dost thou weep? Why dost thou tremble thus?
Why doth thy panting heart, and cautious touch,
Speak thee but half convinc'd? Whence are thy fears?
Why art thou silent? Canst thou doubt me still?

Char. No, Wilmot! no; I'm blind with too much light:
O'ercome with wonder, and oppress'd with joy.
This vast profusion of extreme delight,
Rising at once, and bursting from despair,
Defies the aid of words, and mocks description.
But, for one sorrow, one sad scene of anguish,
That checks the swelling torrent of my joys,
I could not bear the transport.

Y. Wilm. Let me know it:
Give me my portion of thy sorrow, Charlotte!
Let me partake thy grief, or bear it for thee.

Char. Alas, my Wilmot! these sad tears are thine;
They flow for thy misfortunes. I am pierc'd
With all the agonies of strong compassion,
With all the bitter anguish you must feel,
When you shall hear your parents——

Y. Wilm. Are no more.
Char. You apprehend me wrong.
Y. Wilm. Perhaps I do,
Perhaps you mean to say, the greedy grave
Was satisfy'd with one, and one is left
To bless my longing eyes. But which, my Charlotte?
Char. Afflict yourself no more with groundless fears:
Your parents both are living. Their distress—
The poverty to which they are reduc'd,
In spite of my weak aid, was what I mourn'd:
That poverty, in age, to them whose youth
Was crown'd with full prosperity, I fear,
Is worse, much worse, than death.
Y. Wilm. My joy's complete!
My parents living, and possess'd of thee!—
From this blest hour, the happiest of my life,
I'll date my rest. My anxious hopes and fears,
My weary travels, and my dangers past,
Are now rewarded all: Now I rejoice
In my success, and count my riches gain.
For know, my soul's best treasure! I have wealth
Enough to glut e'en avarice itself:
No more shall cruel want, or proud contempt,
Oppress the sinking spirits, or insult
The hoary heads of those who gave me being.
Char. 'Tis now, O riches, I conceive your worth:
You are not base, nor can you be superfluous,
But when misplac'd in base and sordid hands.
Fly, fly, my Wilmot! leave thy happy Charlotte!
Thy filial piety, the sighs and tears
Of thy lamenting parents, call thee hence.
Y. Wilm. I have a friend, the partner of my voyage,
Who, in the storm last night, was shipwreck'd with me.
Char. Shipwreck'd last night!—O, you immortal powers!
What have you suffered! How were you preserv'd?

Y. Wilm. Let that, and all my other strange escapes,
And perilous adventures, be the theme
Of many a happy winter night to come.
My present purpose was t'intreat my angel,
To know this friend, this other better Wilmot,
And come with him this evening to my father's:
I'll send him to thee.

Char. I consent with pleasure.

Y. Wilm. Heavens! what a night! How shall I bear my joy!
My parents, yours, my friends, all will be mine.
If such the early hopes, the vernal bloom,
The distant prospect of my future bliss,
Then what the ruddy autumn? What the fruit,
The full possession of thy heavenly charms!

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

A Street in Penryn.

Enter RANDAL.

Rand. Poor! poor! and friendless! whither shall I wander?
And to what point direct my views and hopes?
A menial servant!—No—What, shall I live
Here in this land of freedom, live distinguish'd,
And mark'd the willing slave of some proud subject!
To swell his useless train for broken fragments,
The cold remains of his superfluous board?—
I would aspire to something more and better.

Turn thy eyes then to the prolific ocean,
Whose spacious bosom opens to thy view:
There deathless honour, and unenvy'd wealth,
Have often crown'd the brave adventurer's toils.
This is the native uncontested right,
The fair inheritance of ev'ry Briton,
That dares put in his claim.—My choice is made:
A long farewell to Cornwall, and to England!
If I return—But stay, what stranger's this,
Who, as he views me, seems to mend his pace?

Enter YOUNG WILMOT.

Y. Wilm. Randal! the dear companion of my youth!—
Sure, lavish fortune means to give me all
I could desire, or ask, for this blest day,
And leave me nothing to expect hereafter!

Rand. Your pardon, sir! I know but one on earth
Could properly salute me by the title
You're pleas'd to give me; and I would not think
That you are he—that you are Wilmot!

Y. Wilm. Why?

Rand. Because I could not bear the disappointment,
If I should be deceiv'd.

Y. Wilm. I am pleas'd to hear it:
Thy friendly fears better express thy thoughts
Than words could do.

Rand. O, Wilmot!—O, my master!
Are you return'd?

Y. Wilm. I have not yet embrac'd
My parents—I shall see you at my father's.

Rand. No, I am discharg'd from thence—O, sir, such ruin——

Y. Wilm. I've heard it all, and hasten to relieve them:
Sure, Heaven hath bless'd me to that very end:
I've wealth enough—nor shalt thou want a part.

Rand. I have a part already—I am blest
In your success, and share in all your joys.
Y. Wilm. I doubt it not.—But tell me, dost thou think,
My parents not suspecting my return,
That I may visit them, and not be known?
Rand. 'Tis hard for me to judge.—You are, already,
Grown so familiar to me, that I wonder
I knew you not at first: yet it may be;
For you're much alter'd, and they think you dead.
Y. Wilm. This is certain; Charlotte beheld me long,
And heard my loud reproaches, and complaints,
Without rememb'ring she had ever seen me.
My mind, at ease, grows wanton: I would fain
Refine on happiness. Why may I not
Indulge my curiosity, and try
If it be possible, by seeing first
My parents as a stranger, to improve
Their pleasure by surprise?
Rand. It may, indeed,
Enhance your own, to see from what despair
Your timely coming, and unhop'd success,
Have given you power to raise them.
Y. Wilm. I remember,
E'er since we learn'd together, you excell'd
In writing fairly, and could imitate
Whatever hand you saw, with great exactness.
I therefore beg you'll write, in Charlotte's name
And character, a letter to my father;
And recommend me, as a friend of her's,
To his acquaintance.
Rand. Sir, if you desire it—
And yet——
Y. Wilm. Nay, no objections! 'Twill save time,
Most precious with me now. For the deception,
If doing what my Charlotte will approve,

'Cause done for me, and with a good intent,
Deserves the name, I'll answer it myself.
If this succeeds, I purpose to defer
Discov'ring who I am till Charlotte comes,
And thou, and all who love me. Ev'ry friend
Who witnesses my happiness to-night,
Will, by partaking, multiply my joys.

Rand. You grow luxurious in imagination.
Could I deny you aught, I would not write
This letter. To say true, I ever thought
Your boundless curiosity a weakness.

Y. Wilm. What canst thou blame in this?

Rand. Your pardon, sir!
Perhaps I spoke too freely;
I'm ready t' obey your orders.

Y. Wilm. I am much thy debtor,
But I shall find a time to quit thy kindness.
O, Randal! but imagine to thyself
The floods of transport, the sincere delight,
That all my friends will feel, when I disclose
To my astonish'd parents my return,
And then confess, that I have well contriv'd,
By giving others joy t'exalt my own. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

OLD WILMOT'S *House.*

OLD WILMOT *and* AGNES *discovered.*

O. Wilm. Here, take this Seneca; this haughty pedant,
Who, governing the master of mankind,

And awing power imperial, prates of patience;
And praises poverty—possess'd of millions:
Sell him, and buy us bread. The scantiest meal
The vilest copy of his book e'er purchas'd,
Will give us more relief in this distress,
Than all his boasted precepts.—Nay, no tears;
Keep them to move compassion when you beg.

Agnes. My heart may break, but never stoop to that.

O. Wilm. Nor would I live to see it.—But despatch. [*Exit* AGNES.

Where must I charge this length of misery,
That gathers force each moment as it rolls,
And must at last o'erwhelm me, but on hope:
Vain, flattering, delusive, groundless hope,
That has for years deceiv'd me?—Had I thought
As I do now,—as wise men ever think,
When first this hell of poverty o'ertook me,
That power to die implies a right to do it,
And should be us'd when life becomes a pain,
What plagues had I prevented!—True, my wife
Is still a slave to prejudice and fear——
I would not leave my better part, the dear [*Weeps.*
Faithful companion of my happier days,
To bear the weight of age and want alone.—
I'll try once more.—

Enter AGNES, *and after her* YOUNG WILMOT.

Return'd, my life, so soon!—

Agnes. The unexpected coming of this stranger,
Prevents my going yet.

Y. Wilm. You're, I presume,
The gentleman to whom this is directed.
[*Gives a Letter.*

What wild neglect, the token of despair,
What indigence, what misery appears
In this once happy house! What discontent,

What anguish and confusion, fill the faces
Of its dejected owners!

O. Wilm. [*Having read the Letter.*] Sir, such welcome
As this poor house affords, you may command.
Our ever friendly neighbour—once we hop'd
T' have call'd fair Charlotte by a dearer name—
But we have done with hope—I pray excuse
This incoherence.—We had once a son. [*Weeps.*

Agnes. That you are come from that dear virtuous maid,
Revives in us the mem'ry of a loss,
Which, though long since, we have not learn'd to bear.

Y. Wilm. The joy to see them, and the bitter pain
It is to see them thus, touches my soul
With tenderness and grief, that will o'erflow.—
They know me not—and yet I shall, I fear,
Defeat my purpose, and betray myself. [*Aside.*

O. Wilm. The lady calls you, here, her valu'd friend;
Enough, though nothing more should be imply'd,
To recommend you to our best esteem,—
A worthless acquisition! May she find
Some means that better may express her kindness!
But she, perhaps, has purpos'd to enrich
You with herself, and end her fruitless sorrow
For one, whom death alone can justify,
For leaving her so long. If it be so,
May you repair his loss, and be to Charlotte
A second, happier Wilmot! Partial nature,
Who only favours youth; as feeble age
Were not her offspring, or below her care,
Has seal'd our doom; No second hope shall spring
To dry our tears, and dissipate despair.

Agnes. The last, and most abandon'd of our kind!
By Heaven and earth neglected or despis'd!

The loathsome grave, that robb'd us of our son,
And all our joys in him, must be our refuge.
Y. Wilm. Let ghosts unpardon'd, or devoted fiends,
Fear without hope, and wail in such sad strains;
But grace defend the living from despair!
The darkest hours precede the rising sun,
And mercy may appear when least expected.
O. Wilm. This I have heard a thousand times repeated,
And have, believing, been as oft-deceiv'd.
Y. Wilm. Behold in me an instance of its truth.
At sea twice shipwreck'd, and as oft the prey
Of lawless pirates; by the Arabs thrice
Surpris'd, and robb'd on shore; and once reduc'd
To worse than these, the sum of all distress
That the most wretched feel on this side hell;
Even slavery itself: Yet here I stand,
Except one trouble that will quickly end,
The happiest of mankind.
O. Wilm. A rare example
Of fortune's changes; apter to surprise
Or entertain, than comfort or instruct.
If you would reason from events, be just,
And count, when you escap'd, how many perish'd;
And draw your inference thence.
Agnes. Alas! who knows,
But we were render'd childless by some storm,
In which you, though preserv'd, might bear a part?
Y. Wilm. How has my curiosity betray'd me
Into superfluous pain! I faint with fondness;
And shall, if I stay longer, rush upon them;
Proclaim myself their son; kiss, and embrace them;
Till, with the excess of pleasure and surprise,
Their souls transported, their frail mansions quit,
And leave them breathless in my longing arms.
By circumstances then, and slow degrees,
They must be let into a happiness
Too great for them to bear at once, and live:

That Charlotte will perform. I need not feign
To ask an hour for rest. [*Aside.*] Sir, I entreat
The favour to retire; where, for a while,
I may repose myself. You will excuse
This freedom, and the trouble that I give you:
'Tis long since I have slept, and nature calls.

O. Wilm. I pray, no more: Believe we're only troubled,
That you should think any excuse were needful.

Y. Wilm. The weight of this, to me is some incumbrance.
[*Takes a Casket out of his Bosom, and gives it to his Mother.*
And its contents of value: If you please
To take the charge of it till I awake,
I shall not rest the worse. If I should sleep
Till I am ask'd for, as perhaps I may,
I beg that you would wake me.

Agnes. Doubt it not!
Distracted as I am with various woes,
I shall remember that. [*Exit, with* OLD WILMOT.

Y. Wilm. Merciless grief!
What ravage has it made! how has it chang'd
Her lovely form and mind! I feel her anguish,
And dread, I know not what, from her despair.
My father too——O, grant them patience, Heaven!
A little longer, a few short hours more,
And all their cares, and mine, shall end for ever.
[*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A Room in OLD WILMOT'S *House.*

Enter AGNES *alone, with the Casket in her Hand.*

Agnes. Who should this stranger be?—And then this casket—
He says it is of value, and yet trusts it,
As if a trifle, to a stranger's hand.
His confidence amazes me—Perhaps
It is not what he says—I'm strongly tempted
To open it, and see.—No, let it rest!
Why should I pry into the cares of others,
Who have so many sorrows of my own?
With how much ease the spring gives way!——Surprising!
My eyes are dazzl'd, and my ravish'd heart
Leaps at the glorious sight. How bright's the lustre,
And how immense the worth of these fair jewels!—
Ay, such a treasure would expel for ever
Base poverty, and all its abject train;
Famine; the cold neglect of friends; the scorn,
Or more provoking pity of the world.
Plenty, content, and power, might take their turn,
And lofty pride bare its aspiring head
At our approach, and once more bend before us.
A pleasing dream?—'Tis past; and now I wake:
For sure it was a happiness to think,
Though, but a moment, such a treasure mine.

Nay, it was more than thought—I saw, and touch'd
The bright temptation; and I see it yet—
'Tis here—'tis mine—I have it in possession—
Must I resign it? Must I give it back?
Am I in love with misery and want?—
To rob myself, and court so vast a loss?
Retain it then—But how?—There is a way—
Why sinks my heart? Why does my blood run cold?
Why am I thrill'd with horror?—'Tis not choice,
But dire necessity suggests the thought.

Enter OLD WILMOT.

O. Wilm. The mind contented, with how little pains
The wand'ring senses yield to soft repose!
He's fallen asleep already—Happy man!
What dost thou think, my Agnes, of our guest?
He seems to me a youth of great humanity:
Just ere he clos'd his eyes, that swam in tears,
He wrung my hand, and press'd it to his lips;
And with a look, that pierc'd me to the soul,
Begg'd me to comfort thee: And—dost thou hear me?—
What art thou gazing on?—Fie, 'tis not well.—
This casket was deliver'd to you clos'd:
Why have you open'd it? Should this be known,
How mean must we appear!

Agnes. And who shall know it?

O. Wilm. There is a kind of pride, a decent dignity,
Due to ourselves; which, spite of our misfortunes,
May be maintain'd, and cherish'd to the last.
To live without reproach, and without leave
To quit the world, shows sovereign contempt,
And noble scorn of its relentless malice.

Agnes. Shows sovereign madness, and a scorn of sense.
Pursue no farther this detested theme:

I will not die; I will not leave the world,
For all that you can urge, until compell'd.
O. Wilm. To chase a shadow, when the setting sun
Is darting his last rays, were just as wise
As your anxiety for fleeting life,
Now the last means for its support are failing:
Were famine not as mortal as the sword,
Your warmth might be excus'd—But take thy choice:
Die how you will, you shall not die alone.
Agnes. Nor live, I hope.
O. Wilm. There is no fear of that.
Agnes. Then, we'll live both.
O. Wilm. Strange folly! where the means?
Agnes. There—those jewels!
O. Wilm. Ah!——Take heed!
Perhaps thou dost but try me—yet take heed!
There's naught so monstrous, but the mind of man,
In some conditions, may be brought t'approve:
Theft, sacrilege, treason, and parricide,
When flatt'ring opportunity entic'd,
And desperation drove, have been committed
By those who once would start to hear them nam'd.
Agnes. And add to these detested suicide,
Which, by a crime much less, we may avoid.
O. Wilm. How couldst thou form a thought so very damning?
So advantageous, so secure, and easy;
And yet so cruel, and so full of horror!
Agnes. 'Tis less impiety, less against nature,
To take another's life, than end our own.
O. Wilm. No matter which, the less or greater crime;
Howe'er we may deceive ourselves or others,
We act from inclination, not by rule,
Or none could act amiss: and that all err,
None but the conscious hypocrite denies.

—Oh! what is man, his excellence and strength,
When, in an hour of trial and desertion,
Reason, his noblest power, may be suborn'd
To plead the cause of vile assassination!

Agnes. You're too severe: Reason may justly plead
For our own preservation.

O. Wilm. Rest contented:
Whate'er resistance I may seem to make,
I am betray'd within: My will's seduc'd,
And my whole soul's infected. The desire
Of life returns, and brings with it a train
Of appetites, that rage to be supply'd,
Whoever stands to parley with temptation,
Parleys to be o'ercome.

Agnes. Then naught remains,
But the swift execution of a deed
That is not to be thought on, or delay'd—

O. Wilm. Gen'rous, unhappy man! Oh! what could move thee
To put thy life and fortune in the hands
Of wretches mad with anguish!

Agnes. By what means
Shall we effect his death?

O. Wilm. Why, what a fiend!—
How cruel, how remorseless and impatient
Have pride and poverty made thee!

Agnes. Barbarous man!
Whose wasteful riots ruin'd our estate,
And drove our son, ere the first down had spread
His rosy cheeks, spite of my sad presages,
Earnest entreaties, agonies, and tears,
To seek his bread 'mongst strangers, and to perish
In some remote, inhospitable land—
The loveliest youth, in person and in mind,
That ever crown'd a groaning mother's pains!
Where was thy pity, where thy patience then?
Thou cruel husband! thou unnat'ral father!

Thou most remorseless, most ungrateful man!
To waste my fortune, rob me of my son,
To drive me to despair, and then reproach me
For being what thou'st made me!

O. Wilm. Dry thy tears:
I ought not to reproach thee. I confess
That thou hast suffer'd much: so have we both.
But chide no more; I'm wrought up to thy purpose.
The poor, ill-fated, unsuspecting victim,
Ere he reclin'd him on the fatal couch,
From which he's ne'er to rise, took off the sash,
And costly dagger, that thou saw'st him wear,
And thus, unthinking, furnish'd us with arms
Against himself. Steal to the door,
And bring me word, if he be still asleep.

[*Exit* AGNES.

Or I'm deceiv'd, or he pronounc'd himself
The happiest of mankind. Deluded wretch!
Thy thoughts are perishing, thy youthful joys,
Touch'd by the icy hand of grisly death,
Are with'ring in their bloom.——But, thought extinguish'd,
He'll never know the loss,
Nor feel the bitter pangs of disappointment—
Then I was wrong in counting him a wretch:
To die well pleas'd
Is all the happiest of mankind can hope for.
To be a wretch is to survive the loss
Of every joy, and even hope itself,
As I have done—Why do I mourn him then?
For, by the anguish of my tortur'd soul,
He's to be envy'd, if compar'd with me! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Room, with YOUNG WILMOT *asleep upon a Bed, in the Distance.*

Enter OLD WILMOT *and* AGNES.

Agnes. The stranger sleeps at present; but so restless
His slumbers seem, they can't continue long.
Hush, I've secur'd his dagger.
O. Wilm. Oh, Agnes! Agnes! if there be a hell,
'Tis just we should expect it.
[*Goes to take the Dagger, but lets it fall.*
Agnes. Shake off this panic, and be more yourself.
O. Wilm. What's to be done? On what had we determin'd?
Agnes. You're quite dismay'd.
[*Takes up the Dagger.*
O. Wilm. Give me the fatal steel.
'Tis but a single murder,
Necessity, impatience, and despair,
The three wide mouths of that true Cerberus,
Grim poverty, demand: they shall be stopp'd.
Ambition, persecution, and revenge,
Devour their millions daily: And shall I—
But follow me, and see how little cause
You had to think there was the least remain
Of manhood, pity, mercy, or remorse,
Left in this savage breast. [*Going the wrong Way.*
Agnes. Where do you go?
The street is that way.
O. Wilm. True! I had forgot.
Agnes. Quite, quite confounded!
O. Wilm. Well, I recover.—I shall find the way.
[*Retires towards the Bed.*

Agnes. Oh, softly! softly! The least noise undoes us.
What are we doing? Misery and want,
Are lighter ills than this! I cannot bear it!—
Stop, hold thy hand!—Inconstant, wretched woman!
What! doth my heart recoil?——O, Wilmot! Wilmot!
What pow'r shall I invoke to aid thee, Wilmot?
[*Scene closes.*

SCENE III.

Another Room.

Enter CHARLOTTE, EUSTACE, *and* RANDAL.

Char. What strange neglect? The doors are all unbarr'd,
And not a living creature to be seen!

Enter OLD WILMOT *and* AGNES.

Sir, we are come to give and to receive
A thousand greetings—Ha! what can this mean!
Why do you look with such amazement on us?
Are these your transports for your son's return?
Where is my Wilmot?—Has he not been here?
Would he defer your happiness so long,
Or could a habit so disguise your son,
That you refus'd to own him?

Agnes. Heard you that?—
What prodigy of horror is disclosing,
To render murder venial!

O. Wilm. Pr'ythee, peace!
The miserable damn'd suspend their howling,
And the swift orbs are fix'd in deep attention.

Rand. What mean these dreadful words, and frantic air!
That is the dagger my young master wore.
Eust. My mind misgives me. Do not stand to gaze
On these dumb phantoms of despair and horror!
Let us search further; Randal, show the way.
[*Exeunt* RANDAL, EUSTACE, *and* CHARLOTTE.
Agnes. Let life forsake the earth, and light the sun,
And death and darkness bury in oblivion
Mankind and all their deeds, that no posterity
May ever rise to hear our horrid tale,
Or view the grave of such detested parricides!
O. Wilm. Curses and deprecations are in vain:
The sun will shine, and all things have their course,
When we, the curse and burden of the earth,
Shall be absorb'd, and mingled with its dust.
Our guilt and desolation must be told,
From age to age, to teach desponding mortals,
How far beyond the reach of human thought
Heaven, when incens'd, can punish—Die thou first.
[*Stabs* AGNES.
I durst not trust thy weakness.
Agnes. Ever kind,
But most in this!
O. Wilm. I will not long survive thee.
Agnes. Do not accuse thy erring mother, Wilmot!
With too much rigour, when we meet above,
To give thee life for life, and blood for blood,
Is not enough. Had I ten thousand lives,
I'd give them all to speak my penitence,
Deep, and sincere, and equal to my crime.
Oh, Wilmot! oh, my son! my son! [*Dies.*

Enter RANDAL *and* EUSTACE.

Eust. Oh, Wilmot! Wilmot!
Are these the fruits of all thy anxious cares
For thy ungrateful parents?——Cruel fiends!

O. Wilm. What whining fool art thou, who wouldst usurp
My sovereign right of grief?—Was he thy son!—
Say! Canst thou show thy hands, reeking with blood,
That flow'd, through purer channels, from thy loins?
Compute the sands that bound the spacious ocean,
And swell their numbers with a single grain;
Increase the noise of thunder with thy voice;
Or, when the raging wind lays nature waste,
Assist the tempest with thy feeble breath;
But name not thy faint sorrow with the anguish
Of a curs'd wretch, who only hopes from this
[*Stabbing himself.*
To change the scene, but not relieve his pain.

Rand. A dreadful instance of the last remorse!
May all your woes end here!

O. Wilm. O, would they end
A thousand ages hence, I then should suffer
Much less than I deserve. Yet let me say,
You'll do but justice to inform the world,
This horrid deed, that punishes itself,
Was not intended, thinking him our son;
For that we knew not, till it was too late.
Proud and impatient under our afflictions,
While Heaven was labouring to make us happy,
We brought this dreadful ruin on ourselves.
Mankind may learn——but——oh—— [*Dies.*

Rand. Heaven grant they may!
And may thy penitence atone thy crime!
Tend well the hapless Charlotte, and bear hence
These bleeding victims of despair and pride;
Toll the death bell! and follow to the grave
The wretched parents and ill-fated son.

THE END.

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